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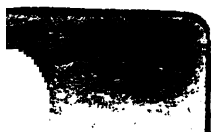
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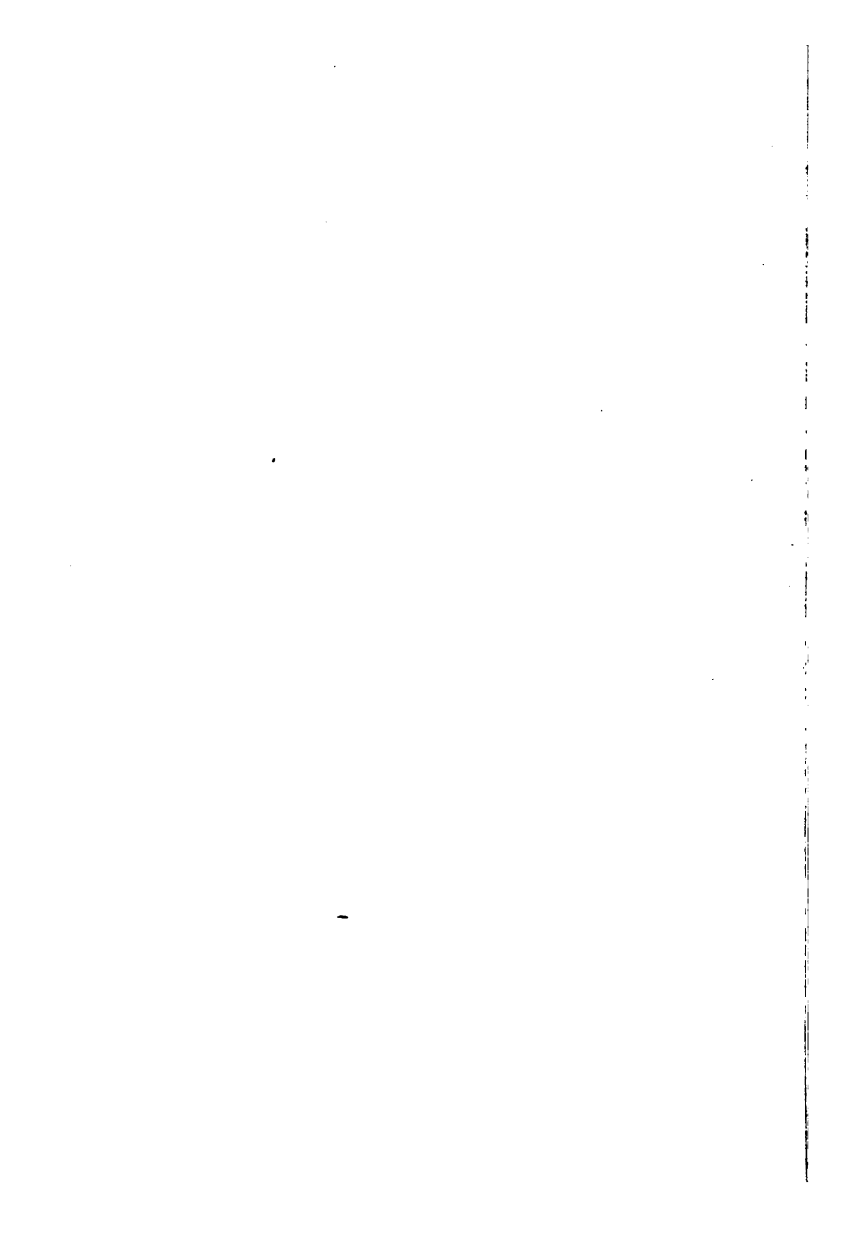
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THE ELIXIR

AND

OTHER TALES

BY

GEORG EBERS

Author of "Margery," etc.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

Mrs. EDWARD HAMILTON BELL

AUTHORIZED EDITION

NEW YORK

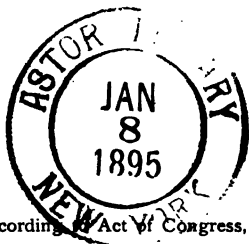
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THE ELIXIR.

Every Leipziger knows well the tall gabled house in the Katherinenstrasse which I have in mind. It stands not far from the Market Place, and is particularly dear to the writer of this true story because it has been in the possession of his family for a long time. Many curious things have happened there worthy of being rescued from oblivion, and though my relatives would now like to relieve me of this task, because I have found it necessary to point out to certain ingenuous ones among them the truth which they were endeavoring to conceal, I rejoice that I have sufficient leisure to chronicle for future generations of Ueberhells the wonderful life and doings of their progenitor as I learned them from my grandmother and other good people.

So here, then, begins my story.

Of old, the aforementioned house was known as "The Three Kings," but in no otherwise was it distinguished from its neighbours in the street save through the sign of the Court apothecary on the ground-floor; this hung over the arched doorway, and gay with bright colour and gilding represented the three patron Saints of the craft: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

This house in the Katherinenstrasse continued to be called "The Three Kings," although, soon after the death of old Caspar Ueberhell, the sign was removed, and the shop closed. And many things happened to it and the house which ran counter to the usual course of events and the wishes of the worthy burghers.

Gossip there had been in plenty even during the lifetime of the old Court apothecary whose only son Melchior had left his father's house and Leipsic not merely to spend a few years in Prague, or

Paris or Italy like any other son of well-to-do parents who wished to perfect himself in his studies, but, as it would seem, for good and all.

Both as school-boy and student Melchior had been one of the most gifted and most brilliant, and many a father, whose son took a wicked delight in wanton and graceless escapades, had with secret envy congratulated old Ueberhell on having such an exceptionally talented, industrious and obedient treasure of a son and heir. But later not one of these men would have exchanged his heedless scrapegrace of a boy for the much bepraised paragon of the Court apothecary, since, after all, a bad son is better than none at all.

Melchior, in fact, came not home, and that this weighed on the mind of the old man and hastened his death was beyond doubt; for although the stately Court apothecary's rotund countenance remained

as round and beaming as the sun for three years after the departure of his boy, it began gradually to lose its plumpness and radiance until at length it was as faded and yellow as the pale half moon, and the cheeks that had once been so full hung down on his ruff like little empty sacks. He also withdrew more and more from the weighing house and the Raths-keller where he had once so loved to pass his evenings in the company of other worthy burghers, and he was heard to speak of himself now and then as a "lonely man." Finally he stayed at home altogether, perhaps because his face and the whites of his eyes had turned as yellow as the saffron in his shop. There he left Schimmel, the dispenser, and the apprentice entirely in charge, so that if any one wished to avoid the Court apothecary that was the surest place. When, in the end, he died at the age of fifty-six, the physicians stated that it was his liver—the

seat of sorrow as well as of anger—which had been overtaxed and abused.

It is true that no one ever heard a word of complaint against his son pass his lips, indeed it was certain that to the very last he was well acquainted with his son's whereabouts; for when he was asked for news, he answered at first: "He is finishing his studies in Paris," later: "He seems to have found in Padua what he is seeking," and towards the end: "I think that he will be returning very soon now from Bologna."

It was also noticeable that instead of taking advantage of such questioning to give vent to his displeasure he would smile contentedly and stroke his chin, once so round, but then so peaked, and those who thought that the Court apothecary would diminish his legacy to his truant son, learned to know better, for the old man bequeathed in an elaborate will, the whole of his valuable possessions to Melchior, leaving only to

the widow Vorkel, who had served him faithfully as housekeeper after the death of his wife, and to Schimmel, the dispenser, in the event of the shop being closed, a yearly stipend to be paid to the end of their days. To his beloved daughter-in-law, the estimable daughter of the learned Dr. Vitali, of Bologna, the old man left his deceased wife's jewels, together with the plate and linen of the house, mentioning her in the most affectionate terms.


All of which surprised the legal gentlemen and the relatives and connections and their wives and feminine following not a little, and what put the finishing stroke to the disgust of these good folk, especially to such of them as were mothers, was that this son and heir of an honoured and wealthy house had married a foreigner, a frivolous Italian, and that too without so much as an intimation of his intention.

With the will there was a letter from the

dead man to his son and one to the worthy lawyer. In the latter he requested his counsellor to notify his son, Melchior Ueberhell, of his death, and, in case of his son's return home, to see him well and fairly established in the position which belonged to him as the heir of a Leipsic burgher and as Doctor of the University of Padua.

These letters were sent by the first messenger going south over the Alps, and that they reached Melchior will be seen from the fresh surprises contained in his answer.

He commissioned Anselmus Winckler, an excellent notary, and formerly his most intimate school friend, to close the apothecary shop and to sell privately whatever it contained. But a small quantity of every drug was to be reserved for his own personal use. He also, in his carefully chosen diction begged the honourable notary to allow the Italian architect Olivetti, who would soon present himself, to rebuild the old house of



“The Three Kings” throughout, according to the plan which they had agreed upon in Bologna. The side of the house that faced the street would not, be hoped, prove unpleasing, as for the arrangement of the interior, that was to be made in accordance with his own taste and needs, and to please himself alone.

These wishes seemed reasonable enough to the lawyer, and as the Italian architect, who arrived a few weeks later in Leipsic, laid before him a plan showing the façade of a burgher’s house finished with a stately gable which rose by five successive steps to its peak crowned by a statue of the armed goddess Minerva with the owl at her feet, no objection could be made to such an addition to the city, although some of the clergy did not hesitate to express their displeasure at the banishment of the Three Saints in favor of a heathen goddess, and at the height of the middle chimney which seemed to have

entered the lists against the church towers.

However, the rebuilding was put in hand, and, of course, the business had to be wound up and the shop closed before the old front was torn down.

Schimmel, the gray-haired dispenser, married the widow Vorkel, who had kept house for the late Herr Ueberhell. These two might have related many strange occurrences to the cousins and kin had they chosen, but he was a reserved man, and she had been so sworn to silence, and had lived through such an agitating experience before the death of the old man that she repulsed all questioners so sharply that they dared not return to the charge.

The old housekeeper as she watched the deserted father grow indifferent to what he had to eat and drink—though he had once been so quick to appreciate the dishes which she prepared so deftly—and neglectful of the attentions which he had been wont to pay

to the outside world, became embittered towards Melchior whom she had carried in her arms and loved like her own child. In former times Herr Ueberhell had been accustomed now and then to invite certain friends to dine with him, and these guests had praised her cooking, but later, and more especially after the death of his cousin and colleague, Blumentrost, who had also been his master, he had asked no one into his well-appointed house.

This retirement of the dignified and hospitable burgher was undoubtedly caused by the absence of his son, but in a very different way to what people supposed ; for although the old man longed for his only child, he was very far from resenting his absence ; indeed the widow Vorkel herself knew that it was the father who had dissuaded the son from returning from Italy until he had reached the goal for which he was striving with unwearied energy.

She also knew that Melchior gave the old man precise information of his progress in every letter, and that when her master turned over the care of the shop to Schimmel, the dispenser, it was only because he had arranged a laboratory for himself on the first floor, where, following the directions received in his son's letters, he worked with his crucibles and retorts, pots and tubes, early and late before the fire. Yet despite this, the housekeeper saw that the longing for his son was gnawing at the old man's heart, and had she been able to write she would have let Melchior know how things stood and begged him to return to Leipsic. "But there ought to be no need to tell him," she would reflect in her leisure moments, "He must know it himself," and for this reason she would force herself as well as she could to be angry with him.

Thus the years passed. Nevertheless, her anger flew to the winds when one day

a messenger arrived bringing a little package from Italy and the master called her into the laboratory. Then the old withered love suddenly came to life once more and put forth new leaves and buds, for what she saw was indeed something wonderful; the Court apothecary held out to her in his carefully washed hands a sheet of gray paper on which in red crayon was an exquisite drawing of a beautiful young woman with a lovely child on her lap. Then, having charged her not to speak of it to any one, he confided to her that this beautiful woman was Melchior's young wife, and the little boy their first-born and his grandchild who would carry on the name of Ueberhell. He had given his consent to his son's marriage with the daughter of his master in Bologna and now he—old Caspar Ueberhell—was the happiest of men, and when the doctor returned to him with wife and child and the thing for which he was so earnestly search-

ing, why, he would not envy the emperor on his throne. When the widow Vorkel noticed the tears that were streaming down the old man's sunken cheeks, her eyes too began to overflow, and after that she often crept to the chest where the portrait was kept to gaze on the little one and to press her lips on the same spot whence the grandfather's had already worn away some of the red crayon.

Herr Ueberhell's joy had been so great that now the longing for his son took deeper hold of him, and he lost strength day by day, yet Frau Vorkel could not persuade him to see a physician. He often, however, inhaled deep draughts of a concoction that he had made in the laboratory with his son's letter before him, and as he seemed to derive no benefit from it he would distil it again and mix with it new drugs.

One evening—after having spent the whole day in the laboratory—he retired un-

usually early, and when Frau Vorkel went into his room to carry him his "nightcap" he forgot his usual amiable and suave manner and growled out at her angrily: "After all these years, can't you prepare my bed for the night without making me burn myself? Must you be inattentive as well as stupid?"

Never had she heard such a speech as this from her kindly master, and when from fright she tipped the tray which she was carrying and spilled some of the mulled wine over her gown, he cried sharply: "Where *are* your wits! First you forget to take the red hot warming-pan out of the bed and now you old goose you spill my good drink onto the floor."

He stopped, for Frau Vorkel had set down the tray on the table in order to wipe her eyes with her apron; then he thrust his feet out of the bed—which was entirely contrary to his usual decorous behavior—and

demanded with flashing eyes: "Did you hear what I just said?"

The widow, greatly shocked, retreated and answered sobbing: "How could I help hearing, and how can you bring yourself to insult an unprotected widow who has served you long and faithfully. . . ."

"I have done it, I have done it," the old man cried, his eyes glistening with joy and pride as if he had just accomplished an heroic undertaking. "I am sorry I called you a goose, and as for your lack of brains, well you might have a few more, but, and this I can assure you, you are honest and true and understand your business, and if you will only be as good to me as I have always been to you. . . ."

"Oh, Herr. . . ." Widow Vorkel interrupted him, and covered her face with her apron; but he would not let her finish her sentence, so great was his excitement and continued in a hoarse voice: You

must grant what I ask, Vorkel, after all these years, and if you will, you must take that little phial there and inhale its contents, and when you have done so you must let me ask you some questions."

After much persuasion, the housekeeper yielded to the wishes of her master, and while she still held the little bottle from which the ether escaped, to her nose, the Court apothecary questioned her hastily: "Do you think that I have always acted like a man, diligently striving for the good of himself and his house?"

Some strange change seemed to take place in Frau Vorkel; she planted her hands on her hips most disrespectfully—a thing she never did except perhaps when she was scolding the maid or the butcher boy—and laughed loud and scornfully: "My, what a question! You may, perhaps, have a larger stock of useless information than an old woman like me,—though strictly

speaking I cannot be called an old woman yet—but despite my being stupid and a “goose,” I have always been wiser than you, and *I* know which side one’s bread is buttered on. Bless me! And is there anything more idiotic than that you, the father of the best son in the world, should sit here alone, fretting yourself yellow and lean until from a stately looking man you grow to be a scarecrow, when one word from you would bring your only child back again and with him the wife and sweet grandchild, that you might all enjoy life together! If that isn’t sheer folly and a sin and a shame. . . .”

Here she checked herself, for her habitually decorous master stood before her in his night shirt, barefooted, and laughed loud and merrily, clapping himself boisterously on his wasted ribs and on the shrunken thighs that carried his thin body. The precise widow was very much upset, she was also horrified at the insolent answer

which,—she knew not how,—had just passed her lips. She endeavored to find some words of excuse but they were not necessary, for the Court apothecary called out, “Magnificent! Glorious! May all the saints be praised, we have found it.” And before the worthy woman knew what he was about the gray-haired invalid had caught her in his arms and kissed her heartily on both cheeks. But the happy excitement had been too much for him and with a low groan he sank down on the edge of the bed and sobbed bitterly.

Frau Vorkel was greatly disturbed for she guessed—and it would seem with reason—that her good master had gone out of his mind. But she presently changed her opinion, for after he had cried unrestrainedly until he was exhausted, Herr Ueberhell gave her a prompt proof of his sanity and returning health. In his kindly and polite manner of former times, he

begged her to set out in the kitchen a bottle of the oldest and best Bacharach. There he bade her bring a second glass and invited her to drink, and clink glasses with him because the greatest piece of good luck had happened to him that day that it was in the power of the blessed saints to grant to mortal man. He, the father, had discovered in Leipsic what his son had sought in vain at all the most famous Universities of Italy, and if he should succeed in one remaining step, the fame of the Ueberhells, like that of the Roman Horatii, would reach to the skies.

Then he became more serious and confessed that he was very weak and broken, and that when he had gone to bed earlier in the evening he had felt that his last hour was not far distant. Death itself sometimes floats 'twixt cup and lip, as has been remarked by a heathen philosopher, and if he should be called away before he had seen

Melchior again, then must she be his messenger and tell his son that he had found that part of the White Lion, of the white tincture of *argentum potabile* or potable silver, which his letter had put him on the track of. His son would know what he meant, and to-morrow he would write down the particulars if he should succeed that night in finding again the substance through which he had attained to the greatest wonder that science had achieved since the days of Adam.

He emptied bumper after bumper and clinked glasses at least a dozen times with Frau Vorkel, who was immensely tickled with the unwonted honour.

After that he drew his chair closer to hers that he might better impress upon her what she was to say to Melchior. He began by telling her that she could never understand the full meaning of what had happened but that she must take his word

for it, he had discovered an elixir whose effect was most wonderful and would change the whole course of events. From now onwards, lying would be impossible, the reign of truth was at hand and deceit had been routed from its last stronghold.

As she, however, shrank back from him, still somewhat fearful, he demanded loftily if she ever would have dared to announce to him, her old master, so candidly what she thought of him, as she had done an hour ago, if she had not inhaled the contents of the phial. And Frau Vorkel had to admit that she had been forced by some occult power to utter those disrespectful speeches. She looked with awed wonder, first at her master, then at the little bottle, and suddenly broke out with: "My! My! What will be left for the judges to do when everyone can be forced to speak out boldly and disclose his smallest sin. My! My! But then we shall hear pretty tales!

From the Burgomaster down, everyone in Leipsic will have to get a new pair of ears, for what one hears will be as outrageous and unseemly as among the savages."

These observations showed the Court apothecary that Frau Vorkel had, despite her want of intelligence, grasped to a certain extent the importance of his discovery; while this pleased him in a way, it also made him uneasy, therefore he made her swear on the crucifix that so long as she lived she would never impart to any living soul, his son excepted, what she had that evening experienced.

Then Herr Ueberhell went back to his search for the unknown element which had given to his son's elixir the power that had been exhibited in such wonderful fashion. But he did not succeed in finding the right ingredient, for as often as he called Frau Vorkel to come and inhale the new mixture, she gave such plausible and politic answers

to his dangerous questions that he could be by no means sure of her absolute truthfulness. Then too the operations progressed slowly because that day at noon his finger had been badly cut by the bursting of a glass retort. So presently he ceased work for a while and insisted that Frau Vorkel should take the phial in her own hand and inhale its contents once more, because it pleased him to try the power of the elixir.

With an amused smile he asked her if she used the great quantities of wool, which she so constantly demanded, for no other purpose than to knit socks for him.

The phial trembled in the hand of the housekeeper, and before she could help it her response had passed her lips:

"You have all the socks that you need and it is surely no great crime for me to knit a few pairs to warm the feet of your assistant, that poor, silent worm who stands downstairs the livelong day in the cold shop."

Despite this reply Herr Ueberhell only laughed and continued the inquisition gaily. He next wished to know who was dearer to the heart of the housekeeper, the assistant or her late husband, to which she rejoined: "Why should I lament Vorkel? He was a bully, who never could learn how to cut out a coat, and always stole his customers' cloth." At that moment there was an ominous crash on the floor, and a powerful odour filled the laboratory; the phial had slipped from the hands of the frightened woman.

What happened after that Frau Vorkel even in her old age shuddered to recall. How it could have been possible for the amiable and pious Court apothecary to give utterance to such objurgations and invectives, such sacrilegious curses and anathemas, and how she, a respectable and proper woman, of good Leipsic people, ever could have allowed herself to attack any one,

least of all her excellent master, in such abusive language were problems she could never solve.

Yet they must not be censured for their use of Billingsgate, for the strong aroma of the elixir forced them to tear aside the veil which in Leipsic, as elsewhere, clothes the ugly truth as with a pleasing garment, and to lay bare all the rancour that filled their hearts.

Later when she thought about the breaking of the phial, the conviction grew upon her limited intelligence that this accident would perhaps prove in the end to be the best thing that could have happened, not only for her but for all mankind. To her excellent master, at least, the Elixir of Truth proved fatal all too soon; the intense excitement of that night had shaken him so cruelly that before the day dawned the feeble flame of his life had flickered out.

Frau Vorkel found him dead the next

morning in his laboratory. He must have gone thither to seek once more for the lost substance after she had helped him to bed. Before he had begun his work he must have wished to encourage himself by a glance at the portrait of his grandchild, for as she opened the door the sheet of paper with the red crayon drawing was wafted from the open chest, beside which her master had fallen, and like a butterfly, fluttered down upon the heart that had ceased to beat several hours before.

Six months after the death of the Court apothecary, Melchior Ueberhell returned home and Frau Vorkel or, as she must now be called, Frau Schimmel, was the only person to whom he wrote to announce the hour of his arrival in Leipsic.

In his letter the young doctor begged her to undertake the responsibility of engaging a man servant and a kitchen maid for him, and of seeing that there was a fire

laid on his hearth to welcome him. He also asked "his faithful old friend" to nail up before the furnace of the laboratory on the first floor the brass triangle which the messenger, who brought the letter, would give to her. It was to be hung with the face, bearing the numerals and the figures of animals, towards the outside.

This news threw Frau Schimmel into a great state of excitement and at the appointed hour everything stood ready for the reception of the future occupants of the Ueberhell house.

Doctor Melchior and his family waited in Connewitz for the sun to set that he might enter his native town after it was dark and yet before the city gates were closed; for it was characteristic of his retiring nature to wish to avoid exposing himself and his beautiful wife and child to the vulgar curiosity of the people. These two had made the journey in a litter carried by mules.

As it was just the time for the Easter fair and many strangers were arriving in Leipzig the travellers passed through the Peterstrasse, across the market-place and entered their newly built house without attracting any attention.

It was too dark for them to see the statue of Minerva on the peak of the high gable and the sun-dial on its face with the circle of animals, but the lighted windows on the ground-floor and in the first story gave the house a hospitable air.

Frau Schimmel who had long been awaiting their arrival went out to meet them and the new man servant held the lantern so that they could see her curtseys.

"May the holy saints bless your home-coming!" the old lady called out, and Melchior felt himself choke at the host of sweet memories evoked by this greeting—of how his mother used to fold his hands and teach him to pray to the holy patrons

of the house, of the sad hour when he had received the news of his father's death—and to his astonishment he felt the warm tears running down his cheeks, the first he had shed for many years and almost before he knew it himself, he had caught Frau Schimmel to his heart and kissed her tenderly.

Then he turned to his slim young wife, who with the boy was standing behind him, and presented her to the old housekeeper :
"The dearest treasure that I won in Italy ! I commend her to your love."

Frau Schimmel raised the beautiful Italian's hand to her lips and lifted the little boy and hugged him. Melchior in the meanwhile hurried to the entrance door, there he bowed three times and solemnly lifted aloft his arms toward the evening-star that was just showing itself above the roof of a house across the market-place.

The old housekeeper noticed this, and rejoiced for she thought that Melchior was

returning thanks to the holy saints for a safe journey, but she was disillusioned when she heard him open his lips and cry towards heaven an invocation which was neither German nor Latin, for she knew the sound of the latter tongue, having heard it so often at mass, but a combination of strange sounding words more like those that she used to hear her late master muttering over his work in the laboratory, with his son's letter before him. It was certainly no Christian prayer and her heart sank within her. When the doctor had ended the ceremony which for all she knew might be an invocation of evil spirits, and entered the house with his wife and child, she went up to him and without a moment's indecision made the sign of the cross on his breast and another on the curly head of the child. Melchior laughed at her but did not rebuff her. Soon the travellers were seated about the neatly laid table in their own house

and Frau Schimmel had her reward in seeing Melchior enjoy the home-made dishes, and little Zeno—for that was the name of the Court apothecary's grandchild—drink the good milk and munch the butter cakes which she had baked to celebrate their arrival. But the young wife hardly tasted anything.

Did not the food please her? Perhaps she was accustomed in Italy to a different way of cooking? "Other nations, other customs."

But who could feel annoyed with that heavenly creature?

Frau Schimmel was of the opinion that she had never seen any one to equal her, and could not bear to take her eyes off her. Yet the appearance of the wife of her old favorite filled her with forebodings, and suddenly, though she was by no means superstitious or given to presentiments, she seemed to see Frau Bianca—so the young

Italian was called—lying on her bier, a light veil over her, and a wreath of lilies-of-the-valley on her raven hair. A sad quiet face!

Frau Schimmel's vision must have been caused by the young wife's excessive paleness. "White as snow, black as ebony" fitted her, as well the beauty of the fairy tale, only "red as blood" was wanting. She was also as tall and slender as the lilies in the little garden that the Court apothecary had owned outside the Petersthor.

After supper Frau Schimmel helped the mother to bathe the little Zeno and to put him to bed, and Melchior also assisted at the performance. As the old lady looked from mother to child a great pity filled her heart for the dear son of her late master who had staked his happiness on a creature so ethereal that the first wind might blow her away; such delicate perfection as that, if her experience did not deceive her, was

hardly adapted to the needs of an everyday German husband. But then did Melchior look like such an one? No.

Again she felt a cold shiver go down her back, for Melchior had taken the bath sheet and was holding it in front of him waiting to wrap the child in it as it was taken out of its tub, and it seemed to her as if he had on a shroud and his bloodless emaciated face with his black hair and moustache looked ghostly over the top of it.

It annoyed her that she should have these stupid, sad thoughts on the occasion of such a happy home coming!

She did her best to drive them away and the child helped her, for it, at least, looked lively enough as it sat in the warm water, and kicked, and splashed, and laughed, and cooed, calling to its parents and then to Frau Schimmel. When it tried to pronounce her name, her heart overflowed and she answered absently, for she was

saying a silent Paternoster for the health and welfare of this blessed child who somehow seemed even lovelier than Melchior had once been, though in his time she had considered him "the sweetest baby that had ever lived."

When the child was in bed the mother folded its hands and murmured what Frau Schimmel knew to be a prayer, but the father touched its forehead and the place about the heart with an essence, speaking at the same time some incomprehensible words. Whatever they meant, they seemed to agree well enough with the incomparable child.

The young wife was tired after her long journey and went early to bed, and when the housekeeper was finally left alone with Melchior, he begged her to tell him how things had gone with his father, after his departure.

The son of her late master had, then,

brought back from Italy his tender and affectionate heart, however stern and anxious his long and colourless face might seem; and when he heard of the old man's longing to see him, and death, his eyes were wet with tears.

He interrupted the course of her narrative but seldom; when she came to his father's last hours, however, and the success of the experiment which had been made on her with the elixir, he plied her with question upon question until he was satisfied as to what he wished to know. Then he suddenly stood still in the middle of the room and lifting his eyes and arms on high cried aloud, like one in an ecstasy: "Eternal Truth, holy Truth! Thy kingdom come!"

These words went through Frau Schimmel like a knife, and as Melchior stood there looking up at the ceiling as if he expected it to open and disclose to him a sight of

Heaven, he seemed so great, and unapproachable, and apart, that she feared him, though in years gone by she had tucked his luncheon into his knapsack before sending him off to school, and tremblingly she yielded to his will as she had done before to his father's and swore again a solemn oath never to reveal what she might see or hear concerning the elixir.

This vow oppressed Frau Schimmel and she breathed more freely when he began to talk about things within the range of her comprehension, about the details of the housekeeping, and the laboratory on the second floor with the big furnace. He must find an assistant who would be silent and discreet and Frau Schimmel knew of one whom she could recommend, for her husband did not enjoy his newly acquired leisure; he had been so used to blowing a furnace and decocting medicines that he could not give up the

occupation and consequently she could not roast so much as a pigeon without having his grim and blear-eyed visage peering over her shoulder.

The sensible woman foresaw that idleness would soon render the old bridegroom discontented, and Doctor Melchior, who remembered the silent man and his skilful hands, was very easily persuaded to give him a trial. At the back of the house there was a cheerful suite of rooms where the house-keeper and the apprentices had formerly lived. Melchior now put this apartment at the disposition of the old couple. Frau Schimmel would lend her aid to his wife, for Frau Bianca understood neither German nor the management of a German household, while from Herr Schimmel he anticipated the best particularly as he—the doctor—meant to devote himself at first entirely to the discovery of a remedy for his wife, whose condition filled him with the deepest apprehension.

The new laboratory was presently the scene of the most zealous labours, and Herr Schimmel was delighted with his new position, for no apothecary and chemist had ever before had such a well-fitted furnace and such delicate scales and instruments to work with ; and if he did not understand what was the end of so much weighing and fusing and distilling, or what the remedies were that the doctor was always decanting from the boiling liquids, yet the occupation made the long summer days pass most pleasantly, for he had none of that love of the open air that most Leipzigers bring into the world with them.

Since his apprenticeship, and a whole lifetime had passed since then, he had left the apothecary shop only twice a year to take a holiday, and on none of these occasions had he ever seen green trees, for his "outings" as he called them, fell, according to his own wish, on the festival of the

"Three Kings" in January, and on the twenty-seventh of March which was his saint's day, his name being Rupert.

Of the eighty holidays that lay behind him—all of which he had spent in going to see a sister who was married to a miller and lived in Gohlis—nine and thirty times it had rained, and forty-one times it had snowed. In consequence of this "a walk in the fresh air" always suggested to his mind, damp clothes, wet feet, ruined shoes, a cold in the head, and an attack of indigestion—the result of his sister's greasy cooking. His wife, too, preferred the inside of the city walls, "where" as she was so fond of saying, "you know where you are."

Thus even in summer Herr Schimmel was always on hand to help the doctor, nor had he cause to complain of being overworked, for the master seemed as fond of a walk in the open air as the assistant was averse to one, and when May came and

the fruit trees were in blossom, when the delicate green leaves of the beeches burst from the bud, and the oaks shed their dry brown foliage in order to deck themselves out in young green, and the dandelions embroidered the fields with gold and then sprinkled them over with silver tissue, when the cowslips and daisies and violets and their spring companions in purple and yellow appeared, and the larches on the banks of the Pleisse turned green, when the nightingale sang and rejoiced in the woods, then Doctor Melchior Ueberhell rarely spent a sunny afternoon at home.

With his beautiful young wife on his arm he wandered through the lovely Laubwald—that precious possession of the city—and though he had often said while in Italy, where it is dryer and the foliage sparser than in Germany, that there was nothing so beautiful as the abounding brooks and the dense greenery of his native

forests, it gave him sincere joy, that spring, to have his opinion confirmed and to see that his dearly loved wife cared as much for the German woods as he did.

When in their walks they encountered other burghers, all eyes rested on the handsome pair, for if Melchior were thin, his figure was tall and his features good, and there was a strange charm in his big, dark, eyes that seemed to find more in the woods than was visible to others, moreover the black clothes of his profession sat as well upon him as did his wife's white dresses and kerchiefs of costly stuffs upon her. These she was fond of relieving by a bit of light blue, her favourite colour. The slim young Italian, with her bowed head and beautiful pale face framed in its black hair, seemed like an elf who had gone out in her light dress to dance the May dance in the moonlight and had decked herself with forget-me-not and gentian.

Whoever saw her felt glad, for it seemed to him as if he had met with a piece of good fortune, but no one sought to make her acquaintance, although the doctor had not omitted to take her, soon after their arrival, to call upon his relatives and the dignitaries of the city. People had asked them at first to dine, but as Melchior always refused because of his wife's delicate health, they did not press the matter; for no one could talk with her as she understood no German, while all who heard her light cough felt that the doctor was right to guard his fragile treasure so carefully.

When the few matrons who visited her called upon her, instead of finding her in the kitchen or the cellar, they found her lying upon the sofa with a book or her guitar in her hands, or perhaps playing with her little boy, and the amiable ones among them explained it by her pale face and delicate air, but the severer ones said

that such idleness was the Italian custom and they pitied the doctor.

What the feminine relatives of the doctor chiefly resented was the fact that the young couple seemed to get on so perfectly well without them. Happiness indeed shone in their eyes, and the silent doctor seemed to find his tongue when he walked in the woods and fields with his beloved wife. The notary Anselmus Winckler was also loud in his praises of both of them. He was the only person who ever joined them in their walks through the woods, and as he had been for several years Melchior's companion at school in Bologna, and had there learned to speak the sweet Italian tongue, he could talk with Frau Bianca like one of her own countrymen. He was a convivial person, and when he was in the tavern, or dining with a friend, he would expatiate on how learned the doctor was in all the secrets of nature and how well Dr.

Vitali, Frau Bianca's father, had known how to cultivate her appreciation of the good and the beautiful. To hear her questions and her husband's tender and wise replies was a pleasure unspeakable.

If the weather were fine the doctor would sometimes go out in the mornings also, and then he liked best to take his young wife to the Ueberhell garden outside the Peters-thor, and show her what rare herbs and fruit-trees his father and grandfather had planted, and Frau Bianca amused herself by gathering the flowers, or helping her child to pick the ripe cherries and early pears.

In Bologna she had found it difficult to entice her husband away from his work, indeed her own father, his master, had held him back, and now she rejoiced that in the new home he was willing to give her so many hours of his time, moreover—he had confessed it to her—instead of the elixir, which she had been taught from childhood

to regard as the worthiest object of research, he was seeking for a medicine that should cure her.

Autumn came, and the starlings assembled on the Thomaskirche, the storks in the village, and the swallows on the roof of the neighbour's house to prepare for their flight towards the south ; heavy storms tore the leaves from the trees, one dull rainy day followed another, and when at last the mountain-ash berries and the barberries were shining in all their brightest scarlet, the rosy flush that had been coaxed into the young wife's cheeks during the long, dry, happy summer changed to a crimson spot, her eyes acquired a strained, longing, mournful expression, and after she had had an attack of coughing she would sink together as if the autumn winds had broken her as they had the stems of the mallow which were hanging from the trellis in the little garden outside.

Then a day came when the Court physician Olearius found his way into "The Three Kings." It was in the middle of December and straw was strewn in the street in front of the Ueberhell house. Those who had held aloof from the young couple in their happy hours now drew near in their misfortune. It seemed as if the young Italian had suddenly become the idol of the inhabitants of Leipsic, so many were the inquiries about her condition, so numerous the friendly offers of service, the kindly gifts of hot-house flowers and rare wines. Just as the Christmas bells rang out along the streets of the city the joyful tidings "Christ is born" a sharp cry rang through the rooms of The Three Holy Kings and Melchior knelt beside his blighted flower that now was whiter even than the lily, for the last shimmer of red had faded forever from her wan cheeks, and he wrung his hands in utter despair.

The funeral train that followed the young Italian, who had appeared among them like a fleeting vision of Paradise, would have done honour to the wife of the Chief Justice.

Every one who was respectable and aristocratic in Leipsic followed her, as well as many humbler folk on whom Bianca's glance had rested but once. People were now so open-hearted, and seemed to wish to give to the dead what they had withheld from the living. Hot tears were shed, for though not one of all the mourners had ever really known Bianca, they felt that they had lost something beautiful.

The only member of the family of Ueberhell' who did not make part of the funeral train was the chief mourner, the bereaved Doctor Melchior himself.

Alone and tearless he paced the chamber that Bianca had occupied. He denied himself to all who wished to see him or to

comfort him, he even refused to admit the notary Winckler.

That the flower of his life was crushed, and that he carried a death-wound in his heart was all that he felt or thought.

Frau Schimmel began at last to fear that he too would die. If the vision that showed her Frau Bianca on her death-bed had come true, why should not the other one concerning the doctor? He ate and drank less than a Carthusian on a fast-day, he offended all the good people who had shown his wife such honour, he went neither to mass nor to his work in the laboratory, and consequently her husband, too, was idle and threatened to become unbearable once more.

How would it all end?

The burghers exhibited great indulgence towards him. He had received a terrible blow, and one must forgive him for not having followed the coffin, particularly,

as nothing else was wanting that was necessary to an imposing and expensive funeral: Frau Schimmel had taken care of that, having arranged it on her own responsibility. When the great healer, Time, had comforted him, then would he draw near to them again, most of his friends thought, yes even nearer than before, now that he had lost his invalid wife who had hindered him from joining their gay circles.

We are so willing to be lenient to the unfortunate, for a Greater than we has visited them with sorrow such as man could not inflict.

But it ended otherwise than his friends anticipated. The Three Kings lay there like a deserted house, and although the tall chimney on the roof began to belch forth streams of smoke by night, as well as by day, hardly four weeks after the death of Bianca, it was commonly supposed that the place was unoccupied. Commonly sup-

posed: for once in a while the knocker was heard when Herr Winckler called, happy childish laughter floated out from the open window, or Frau Schimmel was seen with her basket on her arm going to market.

But no one ever met the doctor, neither at mass nor in the street, and yet he did not always remain at home.

In summer at sunrise he went to the churchyard, and from there into the woods; in winter, when the first stars appeared, he wrapped himself in his black cloak and went to Bianca's grave, and thence to one of the neighbouring villages, but he never entered anywhere, and only the sexton who admitted him to the graveyard, and the gate watchman, who opened the burgher's wicket to him, ever exchanged greetings with him.

At home he wandered around no longer, idle and fasting, but ate his meals regularly, and threw himself into his work with such

passionate energy, that even the industrious Schimmel found it too much, and Frau Schimmel grew anxious. The latter, too, knew what the doctor hoped to accomplish by his hard work, for she had spied upon him, but she must not be blamed as it had been with the most praiseworthy intention.

Four weeks after Bianca's death, and after he had shed many hot and heart-felt tears, Melchior turned for the first time to his work again.

It happened late in the evening, and before he went into the laboratory he uttered such strange words over the sleeping child that Frau Schimmel, who was watching beside it, was frightened, especially as Schimmel had not been called to aid the doctor, and what might happen to the distraught man, if he were left to work alone, passed in gloomy visions before the old lady. So she concealed herself behind the bellows that were attached to the furnace, and there

she was witness of events that sent cold shivers down her back whenever she thought of them.

In his best holiday costume of black velvet puffed with silk he entered the laboratory, holding himself very erect. The high, arched room was only dimly lighted by a hanging-lamp, but when Frau Schimmel heard his steps she shrank together till, as she fancied, she must have become smaller and less easily discoverable. What she feared was that he might start the furnace and she should be obliged to reveal herself because of the heat.

But to her great relief he walked straight into the middle of the laboratory and stopped directly under the lamp, which was suspended from the point where the ribs of the vaulting intersected. There he waved a fresh laurel branch towards every side of the room and called out the same words and names that he had murmured by

the bed-side of his son, only louder and more imperiously.

To the listener it was perfectly clear that this was an invocation of spirits, and her knees trembled under her, and her teeth chattered so audibly that she feared he must hear her. Though she closed her eyes tightly in order not to see the hellish brood that was about to pervade that Christian house, fearing that she might be strangled by them or go mad; yet the unholy creatures must have entered the laboratory obedient to their master's call for she distinctly heard him greet one of them solemnly.

As she did not smell any sulphur fumes nor see any dancing flames when she peeped out from under her half-closed lids, she gathered sufficient courage to look about her. But she saw nothing save the doctor on his knees talking into the corner of the laboratory, where there was nothing

but the broom with which she had swept the stone floor that morning, and the shabby old brown peruke that Herr Schimmel was in the habit of putting on in the winter when he crossed the court-yard.

These apparitions she knew so intimately that she began to be reassured, and her confidence once restored she reflected that either the spirits must have held her unworthy of a sight of them and have been visible only to the master, or else that the doctor had gone completely out of his mind. Of her own sanity she had no doubts for her mind was made of sterner stuff and would therefore be less easily affected.

Whether Doctor Melchior were holding converse with the broom, or the peruke, or a spectre whom he, and no one else could see Frau Schimmel could not tell, but she had then recovered herself sufficiently to be able to listen attentively.

She crossed herself several times for the sake of greater safety, and what she heard from the doctor's own mouth remained a secret between her and Schimmel.

Not a word did she lose till Melchior went into the library next the laboratory, and then she thought it expedient to leave her hiding-place and hurry to her room.

Schimmel had long been in bed, and his snoring greeted her as she entered, but she wakened him to tell him breathlessly what she had just seen and heard.

After she had explained her anxiety about the doctor and its consequences, she continued that the apparition which the doctor had invoked was the Spirit of Truth.

Whether it had been obedient to the call she could not say, but, at any rate it had been no demon of hell—God be praised—bringing a reek of the pit, and besides Satan was the Prince of Lies and would consider himself insulted if he were

called the Spirit of Truth, moreover the spirit who had appeared to the doctor had behaved in the most exemplary manner.

The master, too, had confessed with true Christian humility and self reproach that he had sinned against the Spirit of Truth, to whom none the less he had dedicated his body and soul, inasmuch as, influenced by his great love for his wife, he had devoted himself to finding a remedy which would cure her, and had thus become a traitor to the object of his life.

After this he had sprung up and held aloft his hand with the forefinger extended and sworn to the spirit that nothing hereafter should seduce him from the pursuit of the elixir which was to render Truth triumphant in the world.

Frau Schimmel described how the doctor's eyes had glowed at these words, and how he had looked as if an invisible hand had written "Truth" in large letters upon

his forehead. He would be as certain to reach his goal as she would be to pray the holy saints for a peaceful death.

After a long silence and much consideration the only thing that Herr Schimmel found to say in answer to these important revelations was : "It is all the same to me," to which his dear wife, with like brevity, and sincere disgust replied : "You fool !"

The next morning the doctor began work afresh and with redoubled zeal.

Every drug that had been reserved from the laboratory of the late Court apothecary was brought, mixed with the elixir and fused ; and he tried each new mixture on himself, for Frau Schimmel was not to be persuaded to smell any more elixirs.

She, however, was more studious than ever of the necessities of the household, and of the material comfort of the doctor and his child, and when she noticed that her master began to cough as his dead wife had done,

she entreated him to take better care of himself, and not to leave his son an orphan : she also instigated Herr Winckler to beg him to consider his own welfare and that of the child.

There was yet another thing that made her unhappy.

Her whole heart was wrapped up in little Zeno, and when he was dressed in his best on feast-days a prettier and nobler looking child than he was not to be seen.

But the doctor did not seem to have much affection for him ; yet in the evenings when the little one was in bed he went through the same performance that had been customary during the lifetime of its mother, and once in a while he would lift the child out of the cradle and press it to his heart so passionately that the boy, in a fright would struggle to get away from him and would cry for Frau Schimmel.

Finally the child became so afraid of its

father that it would not go near him and this the old housekeeper could bear no longer, so she took her courage in her hands and spoke to her master about it.

She began by saying she had not forgotten that, according to his dead father the saints had endowed her with a very limited intelligence, but that she knew enough to be certain that it could be neither wise, nor right for a man who had been blessed with such a fine son, to be indifferent to his treasure and indeed to estrange it.

The extraordinary man looked at her with his sad eyes and answered thoughtfully: "I demand nothing from the boy because I have no other idea than to give him all I have and am. For his benefit I am seeking something higher than the world has yet known, and I shall find it."

The lofty words silenced Frau Schimmel, but she thought to herself: "With my few

brains I am yet wiser than you. A heart-felt, willing kiss from your child would make you happier than all the learning that you make so much fuss about, and a caress or a spank from you — each at the proper time — would do little Zeno more good than all the world-improving discoveries in search of which you embitter your days and nights.”

One beautiful afternoon in June on her return from the graveyard, whither she regularly took the boy, and where she herself carefully tended the white roses on Bianca's grave, she found the doctor stretched on the sofa, instead of being in the laboratory as usual, and as he sighed heavily when she entered, she asked him respectfully what it was that oppressed him.

At first he shook his head as if he wished to be left alone, but when she, in spite of this, remained and he noticed that

her gray eyes were full of tears, he suddenly remembered that by the side of his mother's coffin, and more recently at Bianca's death-bed they had wept together, then his full heart overflowed, and gasping and shaken by his cough he burst forth with: "It will soon be over—I feel it within me, and yet I am no nearer to the goal. All the elements of nature I have called to my aid—all the spirits 'twixt Heaven and Earth over whom necromancy has any power have I made subject to my will and have commanded them to help me—to what end? There stands the elixir and is hardly more valuable than the small beer with which the servant down-stairs quenches his thirst, indeed it is less useful for who derives any benefit from it? I shall quit this world an unhappy man who has wasted his life and talents in untold efforts from his school-days until now—and yet, if the spirit would only reveal to

me the missing substance which should give to this liquid in my hand the power that it once possessed, gladly would I sacrifice twenty lives! Oh! you faithful old soul, you can never understand it, I know. But this world, where lying and deceit flourish, would be changed into a Paradise, and it would be an Ueberhell whom mankind would have to thank for the great blessing. And now — now!”

Here he buried his face in his hands like one in despair. Frau Schimmel regarded the sorrowful man with deep sympathy, and as it was in her nature to try and comfort those who wept rather than to join in their lamentations, she cast about her for something that would console him.

She had not far to seek, for there in the bay-window was perched little Zeno, carefully picking the green leaves off a rose bough that he had been told to gather from his mother's grave to take home to his

father. The whole stem was now bare but the white blossom at the end was untouched, and still beautiful.

She beckoned to the boy, and in a low voice bade him rouse his father and give him the rose from the churchyard; little Zeno obeyed and walked straight towards Melchior; opposite the sofa his courage failed him for a moment, but he took heart again and laying his little hand on the prematurely gray hair of the disheartened sage said, with all the sweet charm peculiar to a child when it speaks to comfort one who is its natural guardian and support: "Father, little Zeno brings you a rose. It comes from the churchyard. Mamma sent it to you with her love."

The doctor, deeply touched, sat up suddenly, grasped the child's hand that held out the rose to him and tried to draw the boy towards him in order to embrace him.

But Zeno, instead of answering the lov-

ing words addressed to him, struggled and cried out sharply, for the strong pressure of his father's hand had driven a big thorn into his finger, and the blood from the wound was running down onto his light blue dress.

The doctor was distracted. He had hurt the one creature for whose future greatness he had sacrificed his waning strength.

There flowed the blood of his son who had come as messenger from his wife! On her he had lavished the one great love of his life and the white rose that she had sent him lay at his feet!

As his gaze fell upon the flower that she had loved better than all others, and then rested upon the crying child, a great tenderness filled his soul and for the first time he felt deep remorse that he had not dedicated his whole life to his love. To devote the remainder of his time on earth,

which he felt would be but short, to the child who stood there crying, seemed to him at that moment his holiest duty; yet the passion of the investigator within him could not be subdued, for as he looked about in search of a cloth to stanch the blood that flowed from the boy's finger his eyes fell upon the bottle of elixir on the table, and then on the rose at his feet and the thought flashed across him that Bianca who had sent him the rose might have indicated to him by the hand of their offspring the substance which he needed to achieve the object of his life.

Of every element found in water or in air, in the earth or fire, he had added a portion to the elixir, save only the blood of a child.

Breathless he caught the hand of his son and held it over the phial, speaking coaxingly to him while drop after drop of the red life blood trickled into the elixir.

Then he put the child in Frau Schimmel's arms and hurried into the laboratory as fast as his tired feet could carry him. There he blew the bellows so violently that the housekeeper looked at him with silent indignation. When all was prepared he poured the liquid into a crucible, set it among the glowing and sparkling coals and murmured strange words and spells over the seething fluid until it boiled up and the hissing bubbles ran over the rim of the crucible. Then he stood the hot vessel in cold water, pronounced one more incantation over it, held it before a mirror — the symbol of the Spirit of Truth and the emblem which she is always represented as carrying in her right hand — and poured the liquid back into the phial. Beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, his eyes gleamed with excitement, and he breathed heavily as he approached his son to try the power of the new elixir on him.

But something most unexpected happened: Frau Schimmel, usually so timid, pressed the boy's face against her breast and, her good gray eyes flashing with her angry determination to resist, cried out: "Do with your elixir what you will, only leave me the child in peace! Little Zeno speaks the truth without any of your mixtures. A child's mind is a holy thing, so his mother who is now an angel would tell you, and I — I will not permit you to misuse it, in order to try your arts upon it!"

And stranger yet! The doctor accepted this rebuff and did not even reprove the old lady for her disrespectful opposition, he only answered with calm certainty: "Neither the child nor any one else is needed to make the experiment."

He inhaled the contents of the phial himself, in long breaths, staring for some time thoughtfully at the floor and then at the arches of the ceiling. His chest rose

and fell heavily, and he wiped the perspiration now and then from his damp brow.

Frau Schimmel watched him anxiously, and she could not say whether he looked more like a madman or a saint as he finally lifted his arms towards heaven and cried: "I have found it, Father, Bianca! — I have found it!"

Frau Schimmel left him alone and put the child to bed. When she returned to the laboratory and found the doctor in the same place where she had left him, she said modestly: "Here I am and if it pleases the Herr Doctor to try the elixir on so humble a person as myself, I am at his service. Only one favour would I ask: would the Herr Doctor be so kind as not to ask questions about Schimmel and myself or any member of the honoured Ueberhell family."

But the doctor hesitated awhile before accepting this offer, for he had not forgotten the defiant words with which she

had withheld his child from him only a short time before, and moreover the trial which he had made on himself had assured him of the success of his discovery; having inhaled the essence it had seemed to him as if the burden of oppression had been suddenly lifted from his mind. And when he turned to the introspection of himself, and questioned his own heart, he found so many spots and defects on what he had hitherto considered faultless, that he was confirmed in the belief that he had seen the true reflection of his own personality for the first time.

Yes, he might well be certain of his success!

And yet the joy of the discovery was clouded. How often had he dreamed of the manifold effects that would be produced by the elixir! At such moments the hope had sprung up within him that it would possess the power to enlighten him con-

cerning his own nature and existence; would enable him to pierce the veil that hides the mystery of the future from mortal eyes; that it would reveal to the mind of man the true nature of things, and solve the problem of life.

Yet all the questions directed to that end, which he asked himself, remained unanswered, and for this reason he was desirous of seeing whether the essence might not perhaps enable others to grasp the real nature of that which until then had been unfathomable by man.

Consequently he could not resist the temptation of letting Frau Schimmel inhale the elixir. Then he asked her why every one who was born was destined to die, and disappear?

To which she only answered: "Such things you must ask of the good God, who has so willed it."

When he wished further to know how,

and of what ingredients the human blood was made, the old lady laughed, and replied lightly that it was red, and more than that she had not learned from the "School-master with the Children," from which she had acquired all that she knew.

Then the doctor cried: "And so my hard-earned discovery is of less value than I hoped!"

But these words had scarcely escaped him before he smiled to himself, for it was the elixir that had forced him to this outbreak, otherwise he would never have confessed to any one, be he who he might, that his wonderful discovery was in any way incomplete.

Being satisfied with his experiences for that day he no longer hindered the old lady from going to rest.

On his own bed he lay and pondered over the limitations of his discovery.

To reveal the truth, wholly and abso-

lutely, was not within the power of the elixir, nor unfortunately did it possess the efficacy to lead one to a perfect knowledge of oneself; on the other hand it was capable of forcing any one who used it to be absolutely honest in his dealings with his neighbours, and that surely was no small gain. Indeed it was enough to place him among the most famous discoverers in all ages, and to inscribe his name beside those of the noblest benefactors of man in the whole round world.

Sleepless, yet filled with triumphant joy, like a general who has won a glorious victory, he watched through the night. When Frau Schimmel came to the house on the following morning she found him with the little Zeno between his knees.

Her suspicion was immediately aroused that the father had misused the child in order to try the effect of the elixir upon it, and she stood at the door and listened.

But the little bottle tightly corked peered from the doctor's breast-pocket and, instead of questioning Zeno, he was talking to him earnestly :

"Your mother," he was saying, "was more precious to me than life or aught else, and you, my little one, are dear to me, too, chiefly because it was she who gave you to me, but who knows if I might not have sacrificed you if the success of the work, to which I have devoted so many years, had depended upon it. Now I have reached the goal, and I tell you, my boy, there are only two joys here below so great as to give a foretaste of the bliss that awaits us in Paradise: one is the sweet rapture of true love, and the other, the transport of the inventor when his experiment is successful. I have known both."

During this speech, which the doctor had made under the influence of the elixir, the boy stared at his father with open mouth,

undecided whether to be afraid, or to consider it all a jest and laugh.

Frau Schimmel made an end of his doubt, for she could not bring herself to stand by patiently and have the child confused by such extraordinary sentiments. She interrupted the doctor: "Little Zeno finds his pleasure in very different ways, don't you, my lamb? You would rather have your father send you to market with Frau Schimmel who buys cherries for you, wouldn't you? Cherries are better for children than 'true love,' and all the other nonsense that men worry themselves about."

The doctor only laughed and said: "One day he will learn for himself what his father meant, and if you wish to buy him cherries, you good old soul, take him along with you and pick out the finest. You might also go to the Nuremberg shop and let him choose the most beautiful horse,

and whatever else among the toys that he wishes for, no matter how expensive it may be; for I owe it in part to my boy that I have attained my object, and I must hurt him a bit more. But don't be afraid! He will hardly feel it."

What did that remarkable man have in mind? Certainly, no good!

As Frau Schimmel felt that she stood in the place of a mother to her darling, she demanded respectfully what the doctor meant to do to the child.

He answered in some embarrassment, and without looking at the old lady; "It is because I have need of a larger quantity of the elixir. If I were to bleed another child — and bleeding is good for every one, big or little — they would accuse me of practising the black arts and perhaps, after their fashion of making a mountain out of a mole-hill, would denounce me as an infanticide. Therefore the boy must spare a few more

drops of his blood, and he will do so gladly if he receives something pretty as a reward. I am very skilful and can draw the blood without hurting him."

When, however, Frau Schimmel clasped her hands, and Zeno, whimpering, hid his face in her skirts, the doctor hastened to add: "There, there, I am not going to do it at once, and perhaps it is just as well that I should experiment with my own blood first. So take the boy out and buy him the finest plaything you can find, and leave a message at Herr Winckler's; he is to come to-day to The Three Kings, for I have something very important to communicate to him."

The old lady was very glad to get the child beyond the reach of his father. His happiness was as incomprehensible to her, as his design on the blood of his child was dreadful, and she led the boy forth quickly. The doctor, however, went into the labora-

tory with wavering steps, and in the next half hour prepared more of the elixir into which he mixed some of his own blood.

The effect was the same as if he had used the blood of his child.

This delighted him so much that he fairly beamed with pleasure. But even then he gave himself no rest. He took the elixir which he had made the day before into the library, and there he wrote and wrote.

At noon he allowed a morsel of food to be brought to him, and ate it seated at his desk. When he had finished he continued his work with his pen, sealing-wax and seal, until the notary, Herr Winckler, called towards evening.

For the first time in the course of their long friendship he fell on the notary's neck, and told him with wet eyes, and broken voice that he had reached the happiest hour of his life, for the great work to which he had already dedicated himself while yet in

Padua and Bologna, was completed, and that only the preceding evening he had achieved the most marvellous discovery of all times.

One of whose effects would be that a new epoch would dawn for the profession to which Herr Winckler belonged—that of the law.

Here his friend interrupted him to inquire what this discovery might be, but Melchior had the force to keep his secret, and only handed over to him the phial of the elixir, which he had previously packed carefully in a jewel casket of Bianca's, of Italian workmanship, and then wrapped in parchment, and tied, and fastened, with many seals.

He also entrusted his school companion with the letters which he had written, saying that his days were numbered, and giving him many instructions. Finally he made the notary swear to be a faithful

guardian and second father to Zeno if he should be taken away.

At midnight the friends parted, deeply moved, and Herr Winckler told his wife that he had never seen any man, let alone the solemn Melchior, so bubbling over and beaming with happiness, and if one could judge by the radiance of his glance, and the fire of his youthful enthusiasm, his friend had many more good years to live.

But what had pleased him in the appearance of the doctor was, alas! only the expiring flicker of the burnt-out candle.

The intense excitement of the last few days had exhausted the sick man, and before dawn Frau Schimmel was roused by his bell. When she entered his room she found him sitting up in bed with burning cheeks and coughing violently. He called for something to drink, saying that he was dying of thirst.

When he was refreshed by a glass of

wine mixed with water, which in Italy had grown to be his favourite drink, he said to the old housekeeper that he would not need to use his son's blood, as his own was equally efficacious. He also asked her if perchance his father had wounded his hand before he had discovered the elixir, and when Frau Schimmel stated that he had, for she remembered the broken glass retort which had cut the Court apothecary's finger the day before his death, he smiled and said: "Now the wonderful fact of his discovery is explained. A drop of the paternal blood must have found its way into the mixture. Thus one riddle after another is solved, and soon the last mystery that remains will become clear to me."

Then he added that having brought Truth into the world he was glad to depart to that region where it was always day, where there were no deceits and no uncertainties, and where the star of his life

that had set would arise for him once more.

He murmured Bianca's name and closed his eyes, while a happy smile lit up his worn, thin face. His breast rose and fell with his irregular breathing, shaken now and then by his cough and feverish shivering, and often he cried out like one inspired: "Infinite labour, measureless reward! All, all fulfilled!"

Frau Schimmel realised that the end had come. After he had received the sacrament, the old lady laid his hand upon the curly head of his son. Melchior gazed fondly into the sweet face of his child, and quietly closed his eyes.

The priest who administered extreme unction to him was fond of telling the story of this last sacrament, for he had never seen any dying man exhibit greater confidence and faith.

Frau Schimmel cried herself nearly blind.

On the third day after the death of Doctor Melchior Ueberhell, his mortal remains were carried to rest with great ceremony, and buried in the place that he himself had chosen during his lifetime.

Between his wife and his mother, rose the little mound that marked his resting-place, and later many who visited the churchyard used to stop beside the graves of Bianca and Melchior, perhaps because of the creeping roses which had been planted beneath the cross of his beloved, and which spread so luxuriantly that they soon covered the husband's grave as well as the wife's, and in the month of June decked them both with a wondrous wealth of blossom.

In the letter which the doctor handed to Herr Winckler, the guardian of his son, shortly before his death, he desired the notary, or his successor, to give to his son Zeno, on the morning of his twenty-fifth birthday, the sealed package containing the

phial, together with the accompanying manuscript.

In a second letter on which was written: "To be opened in case my son Zeno should die before reaching his twenty-fifth birthday," he informed the notary of the power that dwelt within the phial, and charged him to employ it for the benefit of mankind.

Both letters—the one to Zeno and the other to the notary — contained precise directions for the making of the elixir, and also the recommendation that it should be sent to all universities and faculties, as well as to the spiritual and temporal authorities of his beloved fatherlands, Saxony and Germany, that it might become the common property of the whole world.

To Frau Schimmel the doctor entrusted the worldly welfare of little Zeno, and to the notary the responsibility of his education, and both of these people not only fulfilled their duties, but gave the child a

large share of their love, so that the orphan thrived both in mind and body.

That he was neither wiser nor duller, stronger nor weaker than his school companions pleased Frau Schimmel, for as she loved to say: "Those people over whom one exclaims when one meets them, either because of their exceptional goodness or badness, are destined to be unhappy in this world."

The old lady also took great pleasure in dressing the boy very finely, and as he would one day be rich, she had no fear for his future, save that on his twenty-fifth birthday he was to receive his father's elixir, concerning which, loyal to her oath, she maintained silence towards everyone.

But even this anxiety was, she thought, to be removed when one day there was an alarm of fire, and she learned that a conflagration had broken out in the oil cellar of the Winckler house, and that the notary's

quarters had been entirely destroyed by the flames.

But she rejoiced too soon, for only Doctor Melchior's letters to his son and to the notary were burned, and the strange old lady could hardly bring herself to forgive the brave and conscientious guardian of her favourite, because at great personal risk he had saved the casket containing the phial.

Of Zeno there is very little to tell, except that from a child he grew to be a fine youth, with the great dark eyes of his mother, and that he cared much about his elegant clothes, and was devoted to his noble horse.

In his twenty-third year he became a doctor of ancient and modern jurisprudence, in his twenty-fourth he gained admission to the famous Leipsic "Schöppen" court of justice, and now the venerable Frau Schimmel as well as his guardian, the notary, whose housekeeper had died in the mean-

while, were strongly urging him to choose a helpmate for life.

As the wishes of his guardians coincided with his own in this particular, he hastened to fulfil them, and his choice fell upon the daughter of an officer of high rank, who had been noticeable at the Rathhaus balls on account of the elegance of her costume.

Frau Schimmel was apprehensive, for according to her ideas, an honourable young woman of good burgher family was better suited to the heir of The Three Kings; yet in reality she considered nothing too good or too beautiful for Zeno, and after she had learned from the officer's servants that their mistress was of a cheerful disposition, and was able with her own skilful hands to dress herself well on very small means, and to keep up an appearance of elegance in her father's house which swarmed with children, she came to the conclusion that Zeno's choice was a wise one.

She therefore gave her consent to his wooing, and at the end of three months the wedding took place with great magnificence, to the sound of drums and trumpets.

The young husband went about as if he were borne on wings.

Surely there was no bride in all Saxony so lovely and so beautiful, and when she refused flatly to have Frau Schimmel invited to the wedding feast, he excused her, thinking that her refusal was the result of her aristocratic surroundings and training. The question did not give rise to any open quarrel, for Frau Schimmel of her own accord announced that it was enough for her to pray for the happiness of the young couple in church.

For four weeks after the wedding-day, Zeno continued to wonder that such exquisite bliss could fall to the lot of any mortal in this world, which so many people regarded as a vale of sorrow, and when his

passionate dark eyes were reflected in the cooler blue ones of his wife, and she returned his caresses sweetly but without laying aside her distinctive and reserved manner, which he laid to the account of maidenly bashfulness, he felt that no one could be more blessed, and that he was the most enviable of men. So the time passed, and his twenty-fifth birthday was approaching. The young Frau Ueberhell awaited with even greater curiosity than her husband, the disclosure of the contents of the sealed package which Herr Winckler had in charge for his ward.

On the morning of the birthday Frau Rosalie dismissed the housekeeper, whom she kept at a distance, and herself admitted the notary when she saw him approach The Three Kings, which by her wish had been richly decorated with stucco and gilding, and furnished with stable room for Zeno's horse and her two ponies.

The old gentleman brought with him the parcel, as the young couple expected and after saying that unfortunately the written instructions, which Doctor Melchior had given him at the same time with the box, had fallen a victim to the flames, he broke the seals that had fastened the package for so many years, and Rosalie clapped her hands when the beautiful casket of carved ivory mounted in gold came to view.

It was opened with great care, and Zeno took from it a paper which lay on a rose-coloured silk pad and on which Doctor Melchior had written in large Roman characters: "To my son Zeno Ueberhell. To be used according to the directions found in the letter accompanying the casket, afterwards to be given to his eldest son on his twenty-fifth birthday, and thus always to be handed down from first-born to first-born, to the last one, which, please Heaven, will be to the end of Time, in order

that the phial, destined to change the aspect of human life, and lead it to its true salvation, may remain forever a priceless heirloom in the Ueberhell family. By means of the accompanying prescription every experienced chemist will be able to make the elixir in any desired quantity. My blessing rest upon you, my son, and upon every Ueberhell who, on his twenty-fifth birthday—that is having reached maturity—shall receive this little bottle and regard it as the most precious of all his possessions.”

This inscription Melchior's son read with trembling voice, and he was so deeply moved by the solemnity of his father's words that he did not perceive his young wife lift the cushion from the casket, examine the phial with curiosity, and then, having removed the glass stopper with difficulty, hold the bottle to her dainty little nose.

But she closed the phial as quickly as she had opened it, for she experienced so strange a sensation, her blood beat through her veins so oddly, that, impelled by some inner force, and regardless of the presence of Herr Winckler, and the tact which she usually displayed, she cried out: "So that, then, is your inheritance! A bit of coloured glass which one could buy in the street for a trifle, and a few brown drops of some stuff which no one knows the use of, now that the directions are burned."

As Zeno, surprised at these shrill notes which he now heard for the first time, in his wife's voice, tried to pacify her, saying that no doubt the liquid possessed marvellous properties, and that they could not blame his sainted father because an unlucky accident had destroyed his elucidation of them, and sought to draw her to him, she pushed him away roughly, and

answered with angry scorn : " Sainted, you call the old man ! As if I didn't know that he was a master of all sorts of hellish arts and black magic ! A fig for such saintship ! "

They were bitter words, and, like one who has been wandering in sunshine and suddenly finds himself overwhelmed by blackest night, Zeno felt himself deprived of strength, the floor seemed to rise, and his knees trembled.

He grasped the phial, hoping to recover himself by aid of the pungent odour that escaped from it, and even as he inhaled the contents, light seemed once more to flood the darkness, and very erect, and with a dignity of which he had not hitherto thought himself capable, he listened to Rosalie's further words.

He grew very pale, and it was with difficulty that he restrained himself, but he did not interrupt her as, forced by the power of

the elixir, she went on to declare, that she had accepted his offer of marriage merely because he was sufficiently presentable, notwithstanding his humble origin, to enable her to walk or ride with him about the city without feeling humiliated ; that she had hoped and expected to find great wealth by means of which as his wife, she could lead the life that she enjoyed, and be able also to help her father to bring up her younger brothers and sisters in a fashion befitting their rank ; that on the contrary she had found him only rich enough to secure her own comfortable existence, and for this she had chained herself to a turtle dove whose eternal cooing was beginning to weary her beyond endurance ; that now her last hope of the riches, which one had a right to expect in the house of a magician, had vanished, and that if it were not for the gossip of the townsfolk, she would return to her father's house.

With this statement Rosalie stopped and looked around her, frightened by her own frankness, which she now recognized as unwise and fatal to the last degree.

The unlooked-for and dignified reserve of her injured husband, together with his ghastly paleness disturbed her, and her inquietude grew to painful anxiety as he maintained silence. At length he said: "I have learned to love you truly and passionately, my wife, and now you show me how you have returned the affection which my heart bestowed upon you. You are right when you accuse me of having laid too much stress upon vain trifles. For that very fault I have been most severely punished, for had I wooed you in woollen, instead of in velvet, I should never have had the misfortune to be bound to a woman like you. Nor was it love that led me to you, but the miserable ambition to bring a nobleman's

daughter into my burgher home. So we both deceived each other, and now if you wish to return whence I took you—you may leave my home unhindered.”

The young wife buried her face in her hands and answered: “No, no, life is too miserable and poverty-stricken at home and I have suffered too much in the long struggle to keep up appearances. And then what would people say? No, no,—I will do everthing that I can to please you.”

“Very well, you may stay,” he replied gloomily.

Frau Schimmel, who had been in the room for some time, turned to the notary and said: “The Court apothecary used to say that I was stupid, but thirty years ago I foretold what has happened here to-day.”

She then implored Zeno to throw the elixir into the Pleisse, but for the first time he exhibited a will of his own. He put

the phial and the document in his father's writing into his breast pocket, and tucking the gray-haired notary under his arm, he left the room.

Frau Schimmel followed his example. Having reached the ground-floor she stopped and, shaking her gray head, murmured: "Doctor Melchior was such a wise man, I wonder he did not order that each of his successors should make the girl of his choice inhale the elixir before he proposed to her. The life I led with Vorkel, and with my second husband Schimmel, who lies beside the first in the churchyard, was hardly perfect, but Zeno's existence will be hell upon earth."

But this time Frau Schimmel was a little wide of the mark in her prophesy. The two young people, for a time, treated each other distantly and coldly, but Frau Rosalie learned to regard her husband with a timid respect that sat well upon

her. As for him he was transformed into a stern man since he had inhaled the elixir, and his severe dress seemed but an outward sign of his earnestness. Before the year was out a boy was given to them, and when Rosalie saw him take the little one in his arms and kiss it, she called him to her bedside and whispered : "Forgive me."

He made a sign of pardon, and stooping, kissed her white face, that was still the dearest in the world to him. Then he went to his own room and inhaled the elixir whose properties and effect he had long before learned from Frau Schimmel. He called aloud, as if speaking to another person : "If she be good to the child, I will no longer make her feel how she hurt me, though I can never forget it."

But it was not granted to him to show by his actions that he had forgiven her, for during the night fever supervened, and before morning she died.

Her hot hand had lain in his, just before her heart ceased to beat, and had pressed it, as if in farewell.

Frau Schimmel followed her darling's unfortunate wife shortly afterwards. Her death was a peaceful and happy one, for Zeno held her withered hand, and talked to her of the days when she had dressed him in his beautiful light-blue frocks. He closed her eyes himself, and followed her coffin to the churchyard.

Only Herr Winckler remained to the widower, who lived alone with his son in The Three Kings, and like a father, more than a friend, aided him in his researches concerning the elixir.

They discovered that it produced its effect only on those who were connected with the Ueberhell family. This was a great disappointment to Zeno, for he set a high value upon truth, and had heard from his father's friend what great blessings for

mankind the dead man had anticipated from his discovery. All his hopes of using it in his profession to make hardened sinners confess their misdeeds, were therefore, vain. For this purpose it was certainly useless and Zeno and Herr Winckler concluded that the reason why its effect was so limited was because it owed its power to the blood of a child of the Ueberhell race.

That its potency extended to those who married into the Ueberhell house was proved by its effect upon Frau Rosalie. As it had also once vanquished Frau Schimmel, they argued that the Court apothecary must have used other blood beside his own, for he certainly had never been connected with his housekeeper by marriage. What had been intended to benefit the whole world, exercised its influence only in one direction, and on the members of one small family; this grieved the

old notary when he recalled the happy and triumphant death-bed of his friend.

The elixir had undoubtedly changed Melchior's son to an incredible extent; from an easily-led, pleasure-loving youth, Zeno became a self-contained man—almost a recluse—and he won for himself the reputation of being one of the severest judges on the Leipsic bench.

High and low doffed their hats to him with respect, but he was not popular.

After he had worked at the Rathhaus long after hours, he would go home alone, and no one sought him out to pass an hour in his company, for everyone feared the rough and brutal frankness of his speech. The gregarious and friendly notary used to wince when he heard his adopted son spoken of as "the hard Ueberhell," or "the sinner's scourge," and he tried his best to make him more human, and to draw him within his circle of friends.

When death overtook Herr Winckler, from whose mouth Zeno used to hear many bitter tirades against the elixir, and Melchior's son found himself entirely alone, and making always more enemies by his irrepressible instinct to speak out what he thought to be the truth, he would sometimes ask himself if it were not better to destroy the elixir, which had brought him nothing but misery, and thus to spare his son and succeeding generations.

But the stern upholder of the law did not feel that he had the right to disobey the instructions of his father. And so the elixir descended to his son, and was given to him on his twenty-fifth birthday by his guardian, for Zeno died before his only child reached that age.

What happened to this second Melchior Ueberhell whose unfortunate history. . . .

Here the story broke off. The son of one of my friends had found it in an old

chest, when he was playing in the attic of The Three Kings. It was written in a discoloured blank-book, which had escaped the devastations of the mice and insects, because it had lain under a pile of aromatic herbs and drugs that had probably belonged to the shop of the Court apothecary.

Between the last page and the cover of the blank-book, which was confided to me, I found a continuation by a later Ueberhell.

This appendix could hardly have been written earlier than towards the end of the last century, to judge by the paper, the stiff, old-fashioned handwriting and, more surely still, by the fact that the writer mentions vaccination as a new discovery. Inoculation was first tried in 1796, and three years later an institution was opened in London where a Leipsic professor of medicine gave lectures.

This communication is signed: "Doc-

tor Ernst Ueberhell, Professor of Medicine." And runs as follows :

Several centuries have passed since the time of the ancestor to whom we owe the wonderful history of the elixir as written in this book, and preserved from generation to generation in our family.

Many Ueberhells have closed their eyes forever, since then, and even the graves of Dr. Melchior and his beautiful wife Bianca have disappeared, owing to the removal of the burying-ground.

On the other hand the portrait in red crayon of Frau Bianca and the little Zeno is still carefully preserved as a most precious heirloom, and was the picture that inspired my sainted father with the desire to become an artist.

Our forebear Dr. Melchior devoted the best of his energies to the benefit, as he thought, of his race, perhaps indeed of all mankind, and yet his efforts were unavail-

ing, for to my sorrow must I acknowledge that much of the enmity felt towards our family, and the disrepute into which our good old name fell, was caused by the elixir. The majority of Ueberhells were accused of presumption and arrogance, of opiniativeness and pugnacity. Many had made themselves disagreeable to their neighbours by their caustic criticisms and ill-natured complaints, at the same time bringing misfortune upon themselves by a most curious exhibition of their own faults.

The whole race degenerated so rapidly through their unbridled license and lack of consideration for others, that they ceased to be received by the members of the better circles, and there came to be an offensive saying that in Leipsic there were men, women, and Ueberhells.

This dislike and animosity were visited upon one generation after another until finally it affected the worldly prosperity of

the family. Even The Three Kings in the Katharinenstrasse which, by the way, had long ceased to be known by that name, was lost to us, and so remained for many years until my sainted father recovered it again, and that the Ueberhells did not fall into even greater distress was due largely to the timidity, nay absolute terror, with which they inspired many people.

From several of my relatives — and they without exception made use of the elixir when they received it on their twenty-fifth birthday — I have heard many particulars concerning the experience, but there was only one who ever said that he had been happier and more contented because of it, and that was my sainted father, the painter, Johannes Ueberhell.

He lost his father very early, and was brought up and educated in poverty and distress by his good mother who remained a widow. It was she who sold the last of

the jewels and plate that had come down to her from earlier and more prosperous days, in order to make it possible for Johannes to go to Dresden and study under a good master.

He was a virtuous youth, with a simple heart, and a disposition so gay that the unfortunate forgot their sorrow whenever he appeared.

Even as a child—so I have heard my grandmother say—he was so cheerful and contented despite their bitter poverty, that he made up a little prayer for himself in which he used to thank God for having created him.

This man, then, grew up to be true-hearted and sincere without the elixir, but he made use of it, none the less, when it came into his possession, and it proved a great blessing to him. As a light-hearted and modest youth—so diffident that he was timid in his intercourse with older persons—he

wandered over the Alps, with only fifty thalers in his pocket and a small knapsack on his back, to Rome where he was received into the studio of one of the most distinguished painters, as apprentice. This latter very soon became jealous of the great talent exhibited by my father and a competition occurring, exerted all his influence to keep the prizes from the German competitors and have them awarded to Italian artists of much less merit.

My father, unable to overcome his fatal shyness by any effort of will, had not the courage to withstand this unfairness until he was called home by his mother for his twenty-fifth birthday, and made use of the elixir.

This not only gave him the resolution, but forced him to proclaim the truth aloud, and to call injustice by its right name.

Owing to his accusations there was a thorough investigation of the affair, a new

judge was appointed who awarded the first prize at once to Johannes Ueberhell, the said prize consisting of a magnificent commission. Having thus achieved an opportunity of proving his worth, he rose quickly to eminence in his profession, and came to be a famous master while he was still a young man.

In later life also he owed nothing but good to the elixir, for his soul was as pure as crystal, and his thoughts of others were so kindly that he could safely speak out everything that was in his mind.

His eyes perceived only the beautiful in the universe; and the beautiful and the true were one with him; so that he made others see and hear nothing save what was lovely and ennobling. Whenever any debasing or evil influence approached him he would trample upon it with all the fierceness of a true Ueberhell; but such conflicts seldom occurred, for his nature was so ex-

alted that it carried him unconscious through the depravity and pollution of this world.

Yes, my father was a happy man, and I cannot deny that the elixir had much to do with his good fortune, for it forced him to reveal his innermost thoughts and to show people frankly what was passing in his mind, thus opening up to them a sunny, pure, and beautiful world which their dull eyes would never have discovered for themselves.

Therefore the best sought him out and made friends with him, and the more he prospered the wiser and better he grew.

One would imagine that the man to whom the elixir had been so beneficial would set a greater value upon it than others, and would be more careful to preserve it for his children and grandchildren. Not so.

After I had finished my studies at the

High School and matriculated at the medical schools of the Leipsic University, my father sent for me to come during my vacation to Rome, where he still lived, and a few weeks before my twenty-fifth birthday I rode through the Porta del Popolo.

The evening before that anniversary my father took out the phial, showed it to me, and asked me what I thought of the verses that he had written on a label and attached to the bottle.

I read them, and they ran as follows:

In hearts alone where modesty resides

Is found the priceless treasure of Pure Truth.

If pride within you secretly abides

That, forced by the elixir's charm, The Sooth

You needs must speak — be wholly pure in thought,

Despising not the teachings wise, of old;

When Truth with equal earnestness was sought.

If speech be silver, silence then is gold!

The scales seemed to fall from my eyes, and I realised why the Ueberhells had

borne such an evil and dreaded name among their fellow-citizens.

The day after I, too, was to use the elixir and I asked my father: "What shall I do if the power of the essence forces me to speak out every thing that is true, simply because it is true, even when it is against my wish and will tend to my own annoyance and distress, as well as to that of others?"

And he replied solemnly: "The truth? Has any one yet found the right answer to the old question: 'What is Truth?' Can you be sure that the noble and mighty Goddess corresponds to your puny and individual conception of her?"

This very idea had disturbed me during my ride over the Alps, and I exclaimed: "Therein lies the dangerous power of the elixir! It kindles in our minds the confidence that we know the truth by means of a charm, whereas we can only possess the

desire to seek for it. Our certainty also misleads us to constrain others to think as we think, and to despise them and persecute them when they differ from us. The elixir made you happy, my father, because you are good and pure, and because the beautiful, to the pursuit of which you have dedicated your life, ennobles everyone and makes every thing harmonious that comes from you.

“But many generations had to pass before you appeared to do honour to the powers of the elixir. I myself have been cast in a less heroic mould, and who can prophesy what my children, if I ever have any, will be like. In this world where every thing is deceitful, and no one is outspoken, the man who alone is under the necessity of proclaiming what he considers the truth, is like a warrior who opposes himself without shield or harness to a fully armed foe. Therefore, my dear father, I

am very reluctant to make use of the elixir to-morrow."

The old gentleman smiled and replied: "Inhale it in peace, my Ernst, for I will confide to you that I have poured the elixir into the Tiber, on whose banks the battle for the Truth has been so often joined, and where so many factions have imagined that they possessed the elixir of Truth. I have filled the phial with water and a drop of aromatic myrrh. The water I took from the fountain of Trevi, which, you know, is supposed to possess the power of inspiring longing — only for the Eternal City, I believe — but perhaps in our phial it may awaken a desire for the Eternal Truth. Let us leave the little bottle to our successors. It will not hurt them to use it while they are young, and they can commit to memory, at the same time, the maxim which is attached to it. Then if the harmless liquid which it contains, together with

the adage and the example of their parents, arouse a craving for truth within them we shall have cared better for them than Doctor Melchior did for our ancestors."

"I think so, too," I answered gratefully. "But," I added, "when you poured the elixir into the river did you not sacrifice a valuable aid to yourself in remaining loyal to the Truth in your creations?"

The old gentleman shook his head. "Let the essence flow away!" he answered. "The verity of the Ueberhells, that is what each one thought to be true, was a thing of naught, and, if you consider it closely, a dangerous thing. Only the mind which is capable of comprehending the laws of Nature can escape the danger of mistaking the fortuitous, and ever changing reality, for the eternal and unchangeable truth. Therefore I do not regret what I have done. If one of my grandsons should wish to become a painter I have obviated

the risk of his falling into the error of believing that he has succeeded when he has only slavishly imitated all the imperfections in the objects he sees around him. Nature reflected in a mirror, would be what his pictures under the influence of our elixir, would have been like, and for a true work of art, in the highest acceptation of the term, something further is needed."

These words of my father removed my last regret for the loss of the elixir, and my sons and grandsons who are now grown men have, with God's help, brought it to pass that the burghers of Leipsic are willing once again to associate with the Ueberhells.

I have only one thing more to say before I close this story.

I have already mentioned the fact that I am a physician. When recently from England came the news of the discovery of vaccination and I saw how a small drop

could penetrate through a man's entire system, then I regretted that my father had thrown away the elixir. If I still possessed it I would, despite my advanced age, try the experiment of inoculating myself with it. The exhalation of the elixir acted only on the tongue, and hence its fatal effect. If, however, it had been possible to infiltrate a desire for truth into the whole man, then, ah then! it might have been possible for a man really to know himself, which is the beginning of his salvation. One thought occurs to me for my consolation: A race that has felt itself forced, generation after generation, to serve the truth must finally have acquired an instinct to do so, like the races of pearl-divers who by inheritance can hold their breath a phenomenally long time.

POSTSCRIPT.

At this point my granddaughter Bianca came in to see me. Three days before she had been betrothed to young Karl Winckler, a descendant of the notary Anselmus.

As I had fallen asleep over my writing she read through undisturbed the book that had fallen from my hands onto the floor.

And so the secret was betrayed, for of course she told the story to her lover.

She expressed her thankfulness that the elixir was out of the world, but asserted impertinently, that if a drop of blood had been drawn from Frau Bianca — whose features as well as name she had inherited — instead of from the little Zeno, or if the women of the Ueberhell family had been allowed to inhale the elixir the consequences might have been entirely different.

“Woman,” she said, “is ruler in the

kingdom of the affections, and in Leipsic as well as elsewhere, the austere Goddess of Truth will find devoted and loving worshippers, as well as dutiful subjects, only when she exhibits goodness of heart combined with grace of manner as does my grandfather."

Perhaps she is not altogether wrong, though women. . . .

And yet both Greeks and Romans represented Truth under the guise of a woman.

FINIS.

THE GREYLOCK

A FAIRY TALE

THE GREYLOCK.

A FAIRY TALE.

ONCE upon a time there was a country, more beautiful than all other lands, and the castle of the Duke, its ruler, lay beside a lake that was bluer than the deepest indigo.

A long time ago the Knight Wendelin and his squire George chanced upon this lake, but they found nothing save waste fields and bleak rocks around it, yet the shores must formerly have borne a different aspect, for there were shattered columns and broken-nosed statues lying on the ground. Against the hillside there were remains of ancient walls that once, undoubtedly, had supported terraces of vines, but the rains had long washed the soil from the rocks, and among the caves and crannies of the fallen stonework, and ruined cellars, foxes, bats, and other animals had found a home.

The knight was no antiquary, but as he looked about him his curiosity was excited: "What can have happened here?" he said, and his squire wondered also, and followed his master. The latter led his horse to the edge of the water to let him drink, for though he had seen many watercourses in the land, he had found nothing in them save stones, and boulders, and sand.

"What if this lake should be salt, like the Dead Sea in the Holy Land?" the knight asked, and the squire answered: "Ugh, that would be a thousand pities!"

As the former raised his hand to his mouth to taste the water, wishing indeed that it were wine, he suddenly heard a strange noise. It was mournful and complaining, but very soft and sweet. It seemed to be the voice of an unhappy woman, and this pleased the knight, for he had ridden forth in search of adventures.

He had already been successful in sev-

eral encounters, and from George's saddle hung the tail-tips of seven dragons which his master had killed. But a woman with a musical, appealing voice, in great danger, offered a rare opportunity to a knight. Wendelin had not yet had any such experience. The squire saw his master's eyes sparkle with pleasure, and scratched his head thinking: "Distress brings tears to most peoples' eyes, but there is no knowing what will delight a knight like him!"

The waters of the lake proved to be not salt, but wonderfully sweet.

When Wendelin reached the grotto from which the complaining notes came, he found a beautiful young woman, more lovely than any one the grey-haired George had ever seen. She was pale, but her lips shone moist and red like the pulp of strawberries, her eyes were as clear and blue as the sky over the Holy Land, and her hair glistened as if it had been spun of the sun-

beams. The knight's heart beat fast at the sight of her loveliness; he could not speak, but he noticed that her hands and feet were bound with chains, and that her beautiful hair was entwined about a circle of emeralds that hung by a chain from the ceiling. She marked neither the knight nor the squire, who stood shading his eyes with his hand in order to see her the better.

Hot rage took possession of the heart of Wendelin when he saw the tears rain down from the lady's large eyes onto her gown, which was already as wet as if she had just been drawn from the lake.

When the knight noticed this, an overwhelming pity chased the anger from his heart, and George, who was a soft-hearted man, sobbed aloud at her pitiful appearance. The voice of the knight, too, was unsteady as he called to the fair prisoner that he was a German, Wendelin by name, and that he

had set out on a knightly quest to kill dragons, and to draw his sword for all who were oppressed. He had already conquered in many combats, and nothing would please him better than to fight for her.

At this she ceased to weep, but she shook her head gently—her hair being chained impeded her motion,—and answered sadly: “My enemy is too powerful. You are young and beautiful, and the darling, perhaps, of a loving mother at home, I cannot bear that you should suffer the same fate as the others. Behold that nut-tree over there! What seem to be white gourds hanging on its naked branches are their skulls! Go your way quickly, for the evil spirit that keeps me prisoner, and will not release me until I have sworn an oath to become his wife, will soon return. His name is Misdral, he is very fierce and mighty, and lives among the waste rocks over there on the north shore of the lake.

You have my thanks for your good intention, and now proceed on your journey."

The knight, however, did not follow her advice, but approached the beautiful woman without more words, and caught hold of her hair to unbind it from the ring. No sooner had he touched the emeralds than two brown snakes came hissing towards him.

"Oho!" exclaimed Sir Wendelin. With one hand he caught their two necks together in his powerful grip, with the other he grasped their tails, tore them in two, and threw them out onto the cliffs above the lake.

When the imprisoned lady saw this, she heaved a deep sigh of relief and spoke: "Now I believe that you will be able to liberate me. Draw this ring from my finger!"

The knight obeyed and as he touched the lady's fingers, which were slender and

pointed, he felt his heart warm within him, and he would gladly have kissed her. But he only withdrew the ring. As he forced it onto the end of his own little finger the lady said to him: "Whenever you turn it round you will be changed to a falcon; for you must know. . . . But woe to us! There, where the water is lashed into foam, is the monster swimming towards us!"

She had hardly finished before a hideous creature drew itself out of the lake. It looked as if it were covered with mouldering pumice-stone. Two toads peeped from the cavities of the eyes, brown eel-grass hung dripping and disordered over its neck and forehead, and in place of teeth there were long iron spikes in its jaws which protruded and crossed one another over its lips.

"A fine wooer, indeed!" thought the squire. "If the stone-clad fellow should not possess a vulnerable spot somewhere

on his body I shall certainly lose my position!"

Similar thoughts passed through the knight's mind, and consequently he did not attack it with his sword, but lifting a huge piece of granite from the ground he hurled it at the monster's head. The creature only sneezed, and passed its hand over its eyes as if to brush away a fly. Then it looked round and, perceiving the knight, bellowed aloud, and changed itself into a dragon spouting fire. Herr Wendelin rejoiced at this, for his favourite pastime was to kill that sort of beast. He had no sooner, however, plunged his good sword into a soft part of the monster, and seen the blood flow from the wound, than his opponent changed itself into a griffin, and raising itself from the ground swooped upon him. His defence now became more difficult, as the evil spirit continued to attack him in ever changing forms, but Sir Wendelin was

no coward, and knew well how to use his arm and sword. At length, however, the knight began to feel that his strength was deserting him; his sword seemed to grow heavier and heavier in his hand, and his legs felt as if an hundredweight had been attached to them. His squire, noting his fatigue, grew faint, and began to think the best thing for him would be to ride off, for the fight was likely to end badly for his master. The knight's knees were trembling under him, and as the monster, in the form of a unicorn, charged against his shield he fell to the ground.

The creature shrank suddenly together and in the guise of a black, agile rat shot towards him.

Sir Wendelin felt that he was losing consciousness, he heard faintly a voice from the grotto where the lady was imprisoned calling to him: "The ring, remember the ring!"

He was just able to turn with his thumb the ring on his little finger. Immediately he felt himself lighter and freer than he had ever felt before, and his heart seemed to harden to a steel spring, while a gay and reckless mood came over him. A wild desire to fly took possession of him at the same time, and it seemed as if he were only fourteen years old once more. Some strange force impelled him aloft into the air, to which he yielded, spreading the two large wings, that he suddenly found himself in possession of, as naturally as if he had used them all his life. He soon felt the feathers on his back stroked by the clouds, and yet he saw everything below him on the earth more distinctly than ever before. Even the smallest things appeared perfectly clear to his sharpened eyes, and yet he seemed to see them as if reflected in a brilliant mirror. He could distinguish even the hairs on the rat and suddenly another

impulse came over him—the impulse to stoop down and catch the long-tailed vermin in his beak and claws. Wendelin had been changed into a falcon, and the rat struggled in vain to escape his powerful attack.

The prisoner had followed the combat first with anxiety, then with joy. While the falcon held the rat in his claws and struck him with his beak again and again, she called the squire to her, and bade him free her from her chains. This was no distasteful task for George, indeed it gave him so much pleasure that he was in no hurry to finish.

When at last all her bonds were loosened, she stood very erect, and lifted her arms, and each moment seemed to make her more lovely and more beautiful. Then she grasped the circle of emeralds, about which the enchanter had wound her golden hair, and waving it high in the air, cried: “Fal-

con, return to the shape you were before. Misdral, hear thy sentence!"

Wendelin assumed immediately his knightly guise, which seemed very clumsy to him after having been a falcon. The rat lengthened itself and expanded until it was once more the giant covered with pumice-stone; it walked no longer erect, however, but crawled along the ground at the feet of the beautiful woman, whimpering and howling like a whipped cur. She then said to it: "At last I possess the emerald circlet, in which resides your power over me. I can destroy you, but my name is Clementine and so I will grant you mercy. I will only banish you to your rocks. There you shall remain until the last hour of the last day. Papaluka, Paparuka,—Emerald, perform thy duty!"

The giant of pumice-stone immediately glowed like molten iron. Once he raised his clenched fist towards Wendelin, and

then plunged into the lake where the hissing and foaming waters closed over him.

The lady and the knight were left alone together. When she asked him what reward he desired, he could only answer that he wished to have her for his wife, and to take her to his home in Germany; but she blushed and answered sadly: "I may not leave this country, and it is not permitted to me to become the wife of any mortal man. But I know how heroes should be rewarded, and I offer you my lips to kiss."

He knelt down before her and she took his head between her slim hands and pressed her mouth against his.

George, the squire, saw this, sighed deeply, and wondered: "Why was my father only a miller? What favours are granted to a knight like that! But I hope the kiss won't be the end of it all; for, unless she is a miserly fairy, there ought to be

much more substantial pay for his services in store for him."

But Clementine bestowed even a richer reward than he had expected upon her rescuer. When she discovered that a lock of the brown hair on Wendelin's left temple had turned grey during the conflict with the evil monster, she said to him: 'All this land shall belong to you henceforth, and because you have grown grey in your courageous fight with evil, you shall be known from this time forward as Duke Greylock. Every prince, yea, even the Emperor himself, will recognize the title which I confer upon you as my saviour, and when the race, of which you are to be the progenitor, is blessed with offspring, I will stand godmother to every first-born. All the sons of your house from first to last, whether they be dark or fair, or brown, shall bear the grey lock. It will be a sign unto your posterity that much good

fortune awaits them. My authority, however, is limited, and if at any time a higher power should hinder me from exerting my influence in behalf of one of your grandsons, then will the grey lock be missing from his head, and it will depend altogether on himself how his life unfolds itself. One thing more. Give me back my ring and take instead this mirror, which will always show to you and yours whatever you hold most dear, even when you are far away from it."

"Then it will ever be granted to me to bring your face before my eyes, oh! lovely lady!" the knight exclaimed.

The fairy laughed and answered: "No, Duke Greylock—the mirror can only reflect the forms of mortals. I know a wife awaiting you, whom you will rather see than any picture in the glass, even were it that of a fairy. Receive my thanks once more! you are duke, enter now into your dukedom!"

With these words she disappeared. A gentle rustling and tinkling was heard through the air, the waste ground covered itself with fresh green, the dry river beds filled with clear running water, and on their banks appeared blooming meadows, shady groves and forests. The broken walls against the hillsides fitted themselves together, rose higher and supported once more the terraces covered with vine stocks and fruit-trees. Villages and cities grew into form and lay cradled in the landscape. Beautiful gardens bloomed forth, full of gay flowers, olive-trees, orange-trees, citron, and fig, and pomegranate-trees, each covered with its golden fruit or many-seeded apples. In the neighbourhood of the grotto in which the fairy had been imprisoned a park of incomparable beauty grew into view, where brooks whispered and fountains played, and shady pergolas appeared, formed of gold and silver trellises, over which a thousand

luxuriant creepers clambered, holding by their little tendril hands.

The fallen columns stood up again, the mutilated marble statues found new noses and arms, and in the background of all this growing magnificence the young duke perceived—at first dimly, as if obscured by mists, then more distinctly—the outline of a palace with *loggie*, balconies, columned halls, and statues in bronze and marble around the cornice of its flat roof.

George, the squire, gazed in open-mouthed wonder, and his mouth remained open until he entered the fore-court of the palace. Then he only closed it to give his jaws a little rest before their future labours began, for such a good smell from the kitchen greeted him that he ordered the willing cook to satisfy immediately the demands of his appetite, as his hunger was greater than his curiosity.

Sir Wendelin continued his way through

the passages, chambers, halls, and courts. Everywhere servants, guards, and heyducks swarmed, and from the stables he heard the stamping of many horses, and the jingle of their halter chains as they rattled them against their well-filled mangers. Choruses of trumpeters played inspiring fanfares, and from the assembled people in the fore-court a thousand voices shouted again and again: "Hail to his Grace Duke Greylock, Wendelin the First! Long may he live!"

The knight bowed graciously to his good people, and when the Chancellor stepped forward, and after a deep reverence set forth in a carefully prepared speech the great services which the duke had rendered to the country, Wendelin listened with polite attention, though he himself was quite ignorant of what the old man was talking about.

Sir Wendelin had lived through so many adventures that it pleased him now

to sit peacefully on his throne, and he did his best to be worthy of the honours which the fairy had conferred upon him. After he had learned the duties of a ruler from A to Z, he returned to Germany to woo his cousin Walpurga. He led her back to his palace, and for many years they governed the beautiful land together. All of the five sons which his wife bore to him, came into the world with the grey lock. They all grew to be brave men and loyal subjects of their father, whom they served faithfully in war, holding fraternally together and greatly enlarging the boundaries of his dukedom by their prowess.

A long time passed and generation after generation of the descendants of the worthy Sir Wendelin followed one another. The first-born son always bore the name of the progenitor of the family, and the fairy Clementine always appeared at the baptism. No one ever saw her; but a gentle

tinkling through the palace betrayed her presence, and when that ceased, the grey lock on the infant's temple was always found to have twisted itself into a curl.

At the end of five hundred years, Wendelin XV. was carried to his grave. No Greylock had ever possessed a more luxuriant grey curl than his, and yet he had died young. The wise men of the land said that even to the most favoured only a fixed measure of happiness and good luck was granted, and that Wendelin XV. had enjoyed his full share in the space of thirty years.

Certain it is that from childhood everything had prospered with this duke. His people had expected great things of him when he was only crown prince, and he did not disappoint them when he came to the throne. Every one had loved him. Under his leadership the army had marched from one victory to another. While he held the

sceptre one abundant harvest followed another, and he had married the most beautiful and most virtuous daughter of the mightiest prince in the kingdom.

In the midst of a hot conflict, and at the moment that his own army sent up a shout of victory, he met his death. Everything that the heart of man could desire had been accorded to him, except the one joy of possessing a son and heir. But he had left the world in the hope that that wish, too, would be fulfilled.

Black banners floated from the battlements of the castle, the columns at its entrance were wreathed in crape, the gold state-coaches were painted black, and the manes and tails of the duke's horses bound with ribbons of the same sombre hue. The master of the hunt had the gaily-colored birds in the park dyed, the schoolmaster had the copy-books of the boys covered with black, the merry minstrels in the land

sang only sad strains, and every subject wore mourning. When the ruby-red nose of the guardian of the Court cellar gradually changed to a bluish tint during this time, the Court marshal thought it only natural. Even the babies were swaddled in black bands. And besides all this outward show, the hearts too were sad, and saddest of all was that of the young widowed duchess. She also had laid aside all bright colours, and went about in deepest mourning, only her eyes, despite the Court orders in regard to sombre hues, were bright red from weeping.

She would have wished to die that she might not be separated from her husband, save for a sweet, all-powerful hope which held her to this world; and the prospect of holy duties, like faint rays of sunshine, threw their light over her future, which would otherwise have seemed as dark as the habits of the Court about her.

Thus five long months passed. On the first morning of the sixth month cannon thundered from the citadel of the capital. One salvo followed another, making the air tremble, but the firing did not waken the citizens, for not one of them had closed an eye the foregoing night, which, according to the oldest inhabitants, had been unprecedented. From the rocky district on the north shore of the lake, where Misdral lived, a fearful thunder-storm had arisen, and spread over the city and ducal palace. There was a rolling and rumbling of thunder and howling of wind, such as might have heralded the Day of Judgment. The lightning had not, as usual, rent the darkness with long, jagged flashes, but had fallen to the ground as great fiery balls which, however, had set nothing aflame. The watchmen on the towers asserted that above the black clouds a silver-white mist had floated, like a stream of milk over dark

wool, and that in the midst of the rumbling and crashing of the thunder they had heard the sweet tones of harps. Many of the burghers said that they too had heard it, and the ducal Maker of Musical Instruments declared that the notes sounded as if they had come from a fine harpsichord—though not from one of the best—which some one had played between heaven and earth.

As soon as the firing of cannon began, all the people ran into the streets, and the street-cleaners, who were sweeping up the tiles and broken bits of slate that the storm had torn from the roofs, leaned on their brooms and listened. The Constable was using a great deal of powder; the time seemed long to the men and women who were counting the number of reports, and there seemed no end to the noise. Sixty guns meant a princess, one hundred and one meant a prince. When the sixty-first was heard, there was great

rejoicing, for then they knew that the duchess had borne a son; when, however, another shot followed the one hundred and first, a clever advocate suggested that perhaps there were two princesses. When one hundred and sixty-one guns had been fired, they said it might be a boy and a girl; when the one hundred and eightieth came, the schoolmaster, whose wife had presented him with seven daughters, exclaimed: "Perhaps there are triplets, *femini generis!*" But this supposition was confuted by the next shot. When the firing ceased after the two hundred and second gun, the people knew that their beloved duchess was the mother of twin boys.

The city went crazy with joy. Flags bearing the national colours were hoisted in place of the mourning banners. In the show-windows of the drapers' shops red, blue, and yellow stuffs were exhibited once

more, and the courtiers smoothed the wrinkles out of their brows, and practised their smiles again.

Every one was delighted, with the exception of the Astrologer, and a few old women and wise men, who drew long faces, and said that children born in such a night had undoubtedly come into the world under inauspicious signs. In the ducal palace itself the joy was not unclouded, and it was precisely the most faithful and devoted of the servants who seemed most depressed, and who held long conferences together.

Both of the boys were well formed and healthy, but the second-born lacked the grey curl which heretofore had never failed to mark each new-born Greylock.

Pepe, the Major-domo, who was a direct descendant of George, the squire, and who knew the history of the ducal family better than any one else, for he had learned it from his grandfather, was so dejected that

one would have imagined a great misfortune had befallen him, and in the evenings, when he sat over his wine in company with the Keeper of the Cellar, the Keeper of the Plate and the Decker of the Table, he could not resist giving expression to his presentiments. His conviction that Bad Luck had knocked at the door of the hitherto fortunate Greylocks was finally shared by his companions.

That an unhappy future awaited the second boy was the firm belief, not only of the servants, but of the whole Court. The unlucky horoscope cast by the Astrologer was known to all, the wise men of the land confirmed it by their predictions, and soon it was proved that even the fairy Clementine was powerless to avert the misfortune that threatened the youngest prince. On the day of the baptism, neither the gentle tinkling sound, nor the sweet perfume, which had heretofore announced her pres-

ence, were perceptible. That she had not deserted the ducal house altogether was shown by the fact that the lock on the temple of the first-born twined itself into a perfect curl. The lock on the left temple of the second son remained brown, and not a sign of grey could be discovered even with a magnifying glass. The heart of the young mother was filled with alarm, and she called the old nurse who had taken care of her dead husband when he was a baby, to ask her what had happened at his baptism, and the old woman burst into tears, and ended by betraying the gloomy forecasts of the Astrologer and wise men. That a Greylock should go through life without the white curl was unheard of, was awful! And the old nurse called the poor little creature, "an ill-starred child, a dear pitiable princeling."

Then the mother recalled her last dream, in which she had seen a dragon attack

her youngest boy. A great fear possessed her heart, and she bade them bring the child to her. When they laid him naked before her, she stroked the little round body, the straight back, and well-shaped legs with her weak hands, and felt comforted. He was a beautifully-formed, well-developed child, her child, her very own, and nothing was lacking save the grey lock. She never wearied of looking at him; at last she leaned over him and whispered: "You sweet little darling, you are just as good, and just as much of a Greylock as your brother. He will be duke, but that is no great piece of luck, and we will not begrudge it to him. His subjects will some day give him enough anxiety. He must grow to be a mighty man for their sakes, and I doubt not that his nurse gives him better nourishment to that end than I could who am only a weak woman. But you, you poor, dear, little ill-omened mite, I

shall nourish you myself, and if your life is unhappy it shall not be because I have not done my best."

When the Chief Priest came to her, to ask her what name she had chosen for the second boy—the first, of course, was to be Wendelin XVI — she remembered her dream, and answered quickly: "Let him be named George, for it was he who killed the dragon."

The old man understood her meaning, and answered earnestly: "That is a good name for him."

Time passed, and both of the princes flourished. George was nourished by his own mother, Wendelin by a hired nurse. They learned to babble and coo, then to walk and talk, for in this respect the sons of dukes with grey locks are just like other boys. And yet no two children are alike, and if any schoolmaster tried to write an exhaustive treatise on the subject of educa-

tion, it would have to contain as many chapters as there are boys and girls in the world, and it would not be one of the thinnest books ever published.

The ducal twins from the beginning exhibited great differences. Wendelin's hair was straight and, save for the grey lock, which hung over his left temple like a mark of interrogation, jet black; George, on the contrary, had curly brown hair. Their size remained equal until their seventh year, when the younger brother began to outstrip the older. They loved one another very fondly, but the amusements that pleased one failed to attract the other; even their eyes seemed to have been made on different patterns, for many things that seemed white to George appeared black to his brother.

Both received equal care and were never left alone. The older brother found this but natural, and he liked to lie still, and

be fanned, or have the flies brushed away from him, and to have some one read fairy stories, which he loved, aloud to him until he dozed off to sleep. It was astonishing how long and how soundly he could sleep. The courtiers said that he was laying up a store of strength, to meet the demands that would be made upon him when he came to the throne.

Even before he could speak plainly, he had learned to let others wait upon him, and would never lift his little finger to do anything for himself. His passive face and large melancholy eyes were wonderfully beautiful, and inspired even his mother with a feeling of awe and respect. She never had cause to feel anxious about him, for there was no better, nor more obedient child in the whole land.

The ill-omened boy, George, was the exact opposite of his brother. He, on the contrary, had to be watched and tended, for

his veins seemed to run quicksilver. One would have been justified in saying that he went out to meet the misfortune which was so surely awaiting him. Whenever it was possible he gave his nurses and attendants the slip. He planned dangerous games, and incited the children of the castle servants and gardeners to carry out the mischief which he had contrived.

But his favorite pastime was building. Sometimes he would erect houses of red stone, often he would dig great caves of many chambers and halls in the sand. At this work he was much more energetic than his humbler playfellows, and he would be dirty and dripping with perspiration when he returned to the castle. The courtiers would shake their heads over him in disapprobation, and then look approvingly at Wendelin, who was a true royal child and never got his white hands dirty.

There was no doubt but that George

was cast in a less aristocratic mould than his brother. When Wendelin complained of the heat, George would spring into the lake for a swim, and when Wendelin was freezing, George would praise the fresh bracing air. The duchess often sighed for a thousand eyes that she might the better look after him, and she constantly had to scold and reprove him, whereas her other son never heard anything but soft words from her. But then George would fly into her arms in a most unprincely manner, and she would kiss him and hug him, as if she never wanted to let him go, while her caresses of her elder son were restricted to a kiss on his forehead, or to stroking his hair. George was by no means so beautiful as his brother; he had only a fresh boyish face, but his eyes were exceptionally deep and truthful, and his mother always found in them a perfect reflection of what was in her own heart.

The two boys were as happy as is every child who grows up in the sunshine of its mother's love, but the lords and ladies about the Court, and the castle-servants felt that misfortune had already begun to dog the footsteps of the younger prince. How constantly he was in disgrace with the duchess! And the accidents that had already happened in the eleven years of his life were too numerous to count. While bathing he had ventured too far out into the lake and had been nearly drowned; once, while riding in the ring, he had been thrown over the barriers by an unmanageable horse; indeed the Court-physician was certain to be called from his night's rest at least once a month, to bind up bloody wounds in the young prince's head, or bruises on his body.

No one, save the Seneschal of the Royal Household, and the Master of Ceremonies bore the unruly boy any malice, but every

one pitied him as an ill-starred child. With what relentlessness his evil destiny pursued him was first made clear when a stone house, which he, together with some other boys, had built, fell down on top of him. When they drew him out from under the blocks and stones he was unconscious, and the Major-domo, who had been attracted by the cries of George's companions, carried him into the prince's room, laid him on the bed, and watched by him until the physician was called.

The old nurse, Nonna, aided the Major-domo, and these two faithful souls confided their anxiety to one another. They recalled the unlucky signs that had accompanied his entrance into the world, and Pepe expressed his fear that the unfortunate child would not come to life again.

"'Tis very sad," he continued, "but I doubt not it would be better for the ducal family if Heaven were now to remove him,

for an early death is, after all, preferable to a long life of vexation and misery."

The boy heard this conversation word for word, for, although he could move neither hand nor foot, and kept his eyes closed, his hearing and understanding were wide awake.

Old Nonna had shed many tears during good Pepe's speech, and he was trying to comfort her when George suddenly sat up, rubbed his eyes with the back of his hands, stretched himself, and then, agile as a brook trout, sprang out of bed.

The two old people screamed in their astonishment, then laughed louder in their joy; but the Court physician, who was just entering the room, looked very much disgusted and disappointed, for he saw the beautiful prospect of saving the life of one of the royal children dissolve before his very eyes.

At the time of this accident the Duchess was away from home. On her return she

forced herself to reprove George for his recklessness before she yielded fully to her motherly affection. When George threw his arms around her neck and asked her if it were really true that he was an ill-starred child, and would never have anything but bad luck as long as he lived, she nearly burst into tears. But she restrained herself, called Pepe and Nonna a couple of old geese, and the "signs," which they had talked about, stupid nonsense. Then she left the room hurriedly and George thought that he heard her crying outside. He had gathered from her tone that she was not convinced of what she was saying, and was only trying to quiet his fears, and from that hour he, too, regarded himself as a child destined to adversity. This was indeed unfortunate, yet it had its compensation, for each morning he anticipated an unhappy day, and when in the evening he looked back on nothing

but pleasure and sunshine, he went to bed with a heart full of gratitude for the good which he had enjoyed but which did not rightfully belong to him. From this time his mother had him more carefully guarded than before, she herself even followed him about anxiously, like a hen who has hatched a duckling, and forbade him to build any more stone-houses.

The noble Duchess was just then weighed down with other cares. One of her neighbors, a king, who had often been defeated in battle by her husband and her husband's father, thought it an excellent opportunity, while the duchy of the Greylocks was ruled only by a woman and her Councillors, to invade the land, and win back some of the provinces which he had formerly lost. Moustache, her Field-marshal, had led forth the army, and a battle was now imminent, which like all other battles, must end either in victory or defeat.

One day a messenger came from the camp, bringing a letter from the brave marshal, who demanded more troops, saying that the enemy far out-numbered him. Then the Prime Minister called the Great Council together, from which, of course, the Duchess could not be absent, and during the time that she presided over the Councilors' meeting, she lost sight of George for the first time for many weeks.

The naughty boy was delighted. He slipped out of the castle, whence his older brother would not move, on account of the bad weather, went down to the shore of the lake, and finding that it was unusually rough, he, together with the son of the head-gondolier, sprang into a small boat, and drove it with powerful strokes out among the waves. The wind lifted the brown curls of the boy, and whenever a large wave bore the skiff aloft on its crest, he shouted with joy. Hitherto he had only

been allowed to go on the lake in a well-manned, safe boat, and then the sailors were under orders to keep to the southern half of the lake. Consequently an excursion on the water had seemed but a mild amusement; but to be his own master, and to fight thus untrammelled against the winds and waves was pleasure such as he had never before experienced.

He had never yet visited the northern part of the lake, there where it was so dark, and mysterious, and where—as old Nonna used to relate—evil spirits dwelt, and a giant covered with pumice-stone was compelled by a curse to live. Perhaps, if he could only get to the other shore, he might see a ghost! That was a tempting prospect! So he turned the bow of the boat towards the north, and bidding his companion to row hard, did the same himself.

As they got further north, the waves increased in size, a storm arose and blew

fiercely in their faces; but the rougher the lake became, the gayer and more boisterous grew George's mood.

His companion began to be afraid, and begged that they might return, but George, though it was not his custom, made his princely authority felt, and sternly commanded the boy to do as he was bid.

All at once it became dark around them, and it seemed as if a powerful sea-horse must have got under the skiff and lifted it with his back, for George was hurled into the air. Then he felt himself caught by a rushing whirlpool which sucked him in its circles to the bottom. He lost breath and consciousness. When he came to himself again, he found himself in a closed cave, amidst strange forms of grey-brown, dripping stalactites. Above the arches of the roof he heard a loud, grunting laugh, and a voice, that sounded like the hoarse howl of a dog, cried several times: "Here we

have the Wendelin brood ! At last I have the Greylock !”

Then George remembered all that he had overheard Pepe and Nonna relate, and all that he had coaxed out of them by his questions. He had fallen into the hands of the evil spirit, Misdral, and now the real misfortune, which had threatened him ever since his birth, was to begin. He was freezing cold, and very hungry, and as he thought of the beautiful gardens at home, of the well-spread table in his father's castle, at which he used to sit so comfortably in his high-backed chair, and of the well-fed lackeys, he felt quite faint.

He also realized what terrible anxiety his absence would cause his mother. He could see her running about, weeping, with her hair in disorder, seeking him every where.

When he was smaller she had often taken him into her bed and played “ Little

Red Riding Hood" with him, and he said to himself that for that and many succeeding nights she would find no rest on her silken cushions, but would wet them with her tears. These recollections brought him to the verge of weeping, but the next instant he stamped his foot angrily, in rage against his weakness.

He was only thirteen years old, but he was a true Greylock, and fear and cowardice were as unknown to him as to his ancestor, Wendelin I. So when he heard the voice of the wicked Misdral again, and listened to the curses which it heaped upon his family, George's anger grew so hot that he picked up a stone, as the first Wendelin had done five hundred years before, to hurl it in the monster's wrinkled face. But Misdral did not show himself, and George had to give up the expectation of seeing him, for he gathered from the conversation between the two spirits that,

owing to an oath which he had given to the fairy, Misdral dared not lay hands on a Wendelin, and that, therefore, he had planned to starve him (George) to death. This prospect seemed all the more dreadful to the boy because of his hunger at that moment.

The cave was lighted by a hole in the roof of rocks, and as George could cry no more, and had raged enough against himself and the wicked Misdral, there was nothing further for him to do but to look about his prison, and examine the stalactites which surrounded him on all sides. One of them looked like a pulpit, a second like a camel, a third made him laugh, for it had a face with a bottle-nose, like that of the chief wine cooper at the castle. On one of the columns he thought he discerned the figure of a weeping woman, and this made his eyes fill with tears again. But he did not mean to cry any more, so he turned

his attention to the ceiling. Some of the stalactites that hung from it looked like great icicles, and some of them looked like damp, grey clothes hung out to dry. This recalled the appearance of the wash hanging in the garden behind the palace — a long stocking, or an unusually large shirt descending below the rest of the clothes — and he remembered how, in the fall, after the harvest, the clothes-lines used to be tied to the plum-trees, and the ends decorated with branches still bearing the blue, juicy fruit, and then his hunger became so ravenous that he buckled his belt tighter round his waist and groaned aloud.

Night fell. The cave grew dark, and he tried to sleep, but could not, although the drops of water splashed soothingly, and monotonously from the roof into the pools below.

The later it grew, the more he was tormented by his hunger, and the flapping of

the bats, which he could not see in the dark.

He longed for it to be morning, and more than once, in his great need, he lifted his hands and prayed for deliverance, and yet more passionately for a piece of bread, and the coming of day. Then he sat lost in thought, and bit his nails, for the sake of having something to chew. He was aroused by a splash in one of the puddles on the floor. It must be a fish! He sat up to listen, and it seemed as if some one called to him gently. He pricked up his ears sharply, and then!—no, he had not deceived himself, for the friendly words came distinctly from below: “George, my poor boy, are you awake?”

How they comforted him, and how quickly he sprang up in answer to the question! At last he was saved. That was as certain to him as that twice two makes four, although it might have been otherwise.

Over the pool, from which the small voice had sounded, appeared now a dim light, a beautiful goldfish lifted its head out of the water, opened its round mouth, and said, in a scarcely audible tone,—for a real fish finds it difficult to speak, because it has no lungs,—that George's godmother, the fairy Clementine, had sent it. Its mistress was by no means pleased with George's disobedience; but, as he was otherwise a good boy, and she was pledged to aid the Greylocks, she would help him out of his difficulty this time.

The boy cried: "Take me home take me home, take me to my mother!"

"That would indeed be the simplest thing to do," replied the fish, "and it lies in our power to fulfil your wish; but, if my mistress frees you from the power of the wicked Misdral, she must promise him in exchange that another ill shall befall your house. Your army is in the field,

and if you return to your family, then will the giant help your enemies ; they will defeat you, will capture your capital, and possibly something evil might befall your mother."

George sprang up and waved his hand in negation. Then his curly head fell, and he said sadly, but decisively: "I will stay here and starve."

The fish in his delight slapped the water with his tail until it splashed high, and continued, although his first speech had already made him hoarse :

"No, no ; it need not be so bad as that. If you are willing to go into the world as a poor boy, and never to tell any one that you are a prince, nor what your name is, nor whence you come, then no enemy will be able to do your army or the lady duchess any harm."

"And shall I never see my mother and Wendelin again?" George asked, and

the tears poured down over his cheeks like the water over the stalactites.

"Oh yes!" the fish replied, "if you are courageous, and do something good and great, then you may return to your home."

"Something good and great," George repeated, "that will be very difficult; and, if I should succeed in doing something that I thought good and great, how could I know whether the fairy considered it so?"

"Whenever the grey lock grows on your head, you may declare yourself to be the son of a duke and go home," the fish whispered. "Follow me. I will light the way for you. It is lucky that you have run about so much and are so thin, otherwise you might stick fast on the way. Now pay attention. This pool drains itself, through a passage under the mountain, into the lake. I shall swim in front of you until we come to the big basin into

which the springs of these mountains empty their waters. After that I must keep to the right, in order to get back into the lake, but you must take the left passage, and let the current carry you along for an hour, when it will join the head of the great Vitale river, and flow out into the open air. Continue with the stream until it turns towards the east, then you must climb over the mountains, and keep ever northwards. Hold your hand under my mouth that I may give you money for your journey."

George did as he was bid, and the fish poured forty shining groschen into his hand. Each one of them would pay for a day's nourishment and a night's lodging.

The fish then dived under, George plunged after it into the pool, and followed the shimmering light that emanated from his scaly guide. Sometimes the rocky passages, through which he crawled on his stomach in shallow water, became so small

that he bumped his head, and had to press his shoulders together in order to pass, and often he thought that he would stick fast among the rocks, like a hatchet in a block of wood. He always managed to free himself, however, and finally reached the big basin, where a crowd of maidens with green hair and scaly tails were sporting, and they invited him to come and play tag with them. But the fish advised him not to stop with the idle hussies, and then parted from him.

George was alone once more, and he let himself be borne along on the rushing subterranean stream. At length it poured out into the open air, as the Vitale river, and the boy fell with it over a wall of rock into a large pool surrounded by thick greenery. There was a great splash, the trout were frightened to death, a dog began to bark, and a shepherd, who was sitting on the bank, sprang up, for the coloured bundle

that had just shot over the falls, now arose from the water and bore the form of a pretty boy of thirteen years.

This apparition soon stood before him, puffing, and dripping, and regarding, with greedy eyes, the bread and cheese which the old man was eating. The shepherd was very, very old, and deaf, but he understood the language of the boy's eyes, and as he had just milked the goats, he held out a cup of the milk to him with a friendly gesture, and broke off a piece of bread for him. Then he invited George to sit down beside him in the sun, which had been up for an hour.

The prince had never before eaten such a meal, but as he sat there in the sun, munching the bread, and drinking goats' milk, he would have thought any one a fool who called him an ill-fated child.

After he had satisfied his hunger, he thanked the shepherd, and offered him one

of the groschen which the fish had given him, but the old man refused it.

George insisted, for it hurt his pride to take anything as a gift from a man clad in rags, but the shepherd still declined, and added, after he had noticed the fine clothes of the little prince, which the water had not entirely spoiled: "What the poor man gives gladly, no gold can repay. Keep your groschen."

George blushed scarlet, put his money in his pocket, and replied: "Then may God reward you." The words sprang naturally and easily to his lips, and yet they were the very ones that the beggars in the duchy of the Greylocks always used.

He ran along by the side of the stream quite fast, in order to dry his clothes, until it was noon, and many thoughts passed through his mind, but so rapidly that he could hardly remember whether they were gay or sad. When at last he sat down to rest

under a flowering elder bush, he thought of his mother, and of the great sorrow that he was causing her, of his brother, and Nonna, and old Pepe, and his heart failed him, and he wept. He might never see them again, for how could he ever accomplish anything that was good and great, and yet the fish had demanded it of him! For three days he continued to be very dejected, and whenever he passed boys at play, or boys and maidens dancing and singing under the trees, he would say to himself: "You are happy, for you were not born under an evil star as I was."

The first night he slept in a mill, the second in an inn, the third in a smithy. Just as he was leaving in the early morning a horseman rode rapidly past, and called out to the smith, who was standing in front of the shop: "The battle is lost. The King is flying. The Greylocks are marching on the capital."

George laughed aloud, and the messenger hearing him, made a cut at him with his riding-whip, but missed him, and the boy ran away. George felt as if some one had removed the burden that had been weighing him down during his wanderings, and he reflected that, if he had remained a prince, and had been at that moment comfortably at home, instead of wandering until he was footsore along the highways, Moustache, the Field-marshal, would have lost the battle.

It was still early when he reached the spot where the river turned to the east. From this point he was to go northwards. He found a path that led from the bank of the river, through the woods, across the mountain chain. The dew still hung on the grass, and above in the oaks and beeches, it seemed as if all the birds were holding high festival, there was such a fluttering, and calling, and chirping, and trill-

ing, and singing, while the woodpecker beat time. The sunshine played among the branches, and fell through onto the flowery earth, where it lay among the shadows of the leaves like so many round pieces of gold. Although George was climbing the mountain, his breath came freely, and all at once, without any reason, he burst into song. He sang a song at the top of his voice, there in the woods, that he had learned from the gardeners. At noon he thought he had reached the top of the mountain, but behind again a yet higher peak arose, and so, after he had eaten the bread and butter which the blacksmith's wife had given him, he continued his way and, as the sun was setting, attained the summit of the second mountain, which was the highest far and near.

Once more he beheld the river which, sparkling and bright, wound through the green plain like a silver snake. Smaller

hills covered with forests fell away on all sides and the tops of the trees caught the radiance of the sinking sun. Over the snow-fields of the further mountain-ranges, a rosy shimmer spread that made him think of the peach blossoms at home; a purple mist obscured the rocky peaks behind him and there, far away to the south, was a tiny speck of blue. That might be his own dear lake, which he was never to see again. It was all so wonderfully beautiful and his heart filled to overflowing with memories and hopes. Neither to the right nor to the left, whither he turned his eyes, were there any boundaries to be seen. How wide, how immeasurably wide was the world which, in the future, was to be his home, in the place of the small walled garden of the castle. Two eagles were floating round in circles under the softly-glowing fleecy clouds, and George said to himself that he was as free and untrammelled

on the earth as they were in the air; suddenly a feeling of delight in his liberty overcame him, he snatched his cap from his head and, waving it aloft, tore down the mountain, as if he were running for a wager. That night he found hospitable housing in the cell of a hermit.

After this he derived much pleasure from his wanderings. He was a child born to bad luck—no denial could change that—nevertheless a child destined to good fortune could hardly have been more contented than he. On the thirtieth day of his journeying he met with a travelling companion in the lower countries, which he had reached some time before. This was a stone-mason's son, who was much older than George, but who accepted the gay young vagabond as his comrade. The youth was returning home after his wanderings as a journeyman and, as he soon discovered that George was a clever, trustworthy boy with all his

wits about him, he persuaded him to offer himself as apprentice to the stone-mason, who was an excellent master in his business. His name was Kraft, and he gladly received his son's companion as apprentice, George having spent his last groschen that very day, and thus the little prince was turned into a stone-mason's apprentice.

In the castle of the Greylocks, meanwhile, there was sorrow and lamentation. The boy who had ventured onto the lake with George, managed to save his life and returned home the following morning, and to repeated questionings he had only the one answer to make—that he had seen the prince drown before his very eyes. With this information the Court had to content itself; but not the duchess, for a king will give up his throne sooner than a mother the hope of seeing her child again. She possessed indeed one means

by which she could know beyond doubt whether her darling were alive or dead, namely the magic mirror which the fairy had given to the first Wendelin, and in which, ever since, the Greylocks had been able to see what they held most dear. In this glass she had seen her husband fall from his horse and die. Once again she took it out of the ivory casket in which it was kept; but so long as George sat imprisoned in the cave of the evil spirit, nothing was to be seen on its smooth surface. That was ominous, yet she ceased not to hope, and thought: "If he were dead, I should see his corpse." She sat the whole night staring in the mirror. In the morning a messenger from the army of the Greylocks arrived, bringing word that the enemy was pressing upon them and that a battle would have to be fought before the fresh troops, which Moustache, the field-marshal, had asked for, could arrive.

The issue was doubtful, and the duchess would better have everything ready for her flight and that of the princes, and, in case of the worst, to carry with her the crown jewels, the royal seal and a store of gold.

The chancellor ordered all of these things to be packed in chests and warned the servants not to forget to add his dressing-gown. Then he begged the noble widow to look into the glass and to let him know as soon as there was any reflection of the battle.

Presently she saw the two armies fall upon each other, but her longing to see her son overcame her immediately, and behold, there in the glass he appeared, seated by the side of an old ragged shepherd and eating bread and cheese, his clothes were soaked and there was no possibility of his changing them. This worried her and she at once pictured him with a cold or lying helpless in the open air, stricken down by

fever or inflammation of the lungs. Henceforth she thought no more about the decisive battle, and forgot all else during the hours that she sat and followed George's movements. Then she sent for huntsmen, for messengers and for all the professors who studied geography, botany, or geology, and bade them look into the mirror, and asked them if they knew where those mountains were, of which they saw the reflection. The smooth surface showed only the immediate surroundings of the boy, and no one could tell what the district was where George wandered. Thereupon she sent messengers towards all points of the compass to seek him.

Thus half the day passed, and when the chancellor came again in the afternoon to inquire after the fortunes of the battle, the duchess was frightened, for she had entirely forgotten the conflict.

She therefore commanded the mirror to

show her again the army and Moustache, the field-marshal, who was a cousin of her late husband. She beheld with dismay that the ranks of her soldiers were wavering. The chancellor saw it, too; he put his hand to his narrow forehead and cried: "Everything is lost! My office, your Highness, and the land! I must to the treasury, to the stables! The enemy—flight—our brave soldiers—I pray your Highness to keep a watch over the battle! More important duties. . . ."

He withdrew, and when half an hour later he returned, very red in the face from all the orders that he had given, and looked over the duchess' shoulder, unperceived into the mirror, he started back and cried out angrily, as no true courtier ought ever to allow himself to do in the presence of his sovereign: "By the blood of my ancestors! A boy climbing a mountain.—And there is such dire need to know . . ."

The duchess sighed and called the battle once more into view. During the time that she had been watching her son, things had taken a better turn. This pleased her greatly, and the chancellor exclaimed: "Did I not prophesy this to your Highness. The circumstances were such that the victory was bound to be ours. Brave Moustache! I had such confidence in him that I saw the caravans bearing the treasure depart, without a pang of uneasiness. Will your Highness be good enough to have them recalled."

After this the duchess had no further opportunity to see the reflection of her boy until the battle was decided and the victory theirs beyond a doubt; then she could use the mirror to gratify the desire of her heart.

When George walked along dejectedly, she thought: "Is that my heedless boy?" and when he looked about him gaily once

more to see what mischief he could get into, she rejoiced, yet it troubled her, too, to have him appear so free from all grief, she feared that he might have entirely forgotten her.

All the expeditions that she sent in search of him were fruitless; but she knew from the glass that he had become apprentice to a stone-mason and had hard work to do. This made her very sad. He was indeed a child born to misfortune, and when she saw him eat out of the same bowl with his companions, food so coarse, that her very dogs would have despised it, she felt that the misery into which he had fallen was too deep, too awful. Yet, strange to relate, he always seemed gay, despite these ills, whereas Wendelin, the heir to the throne, grew more peevish every day.

The duchy of this fortunate youth had been enlarged by the late successful war,

and the assembly of the states of the empire was debating whether it should not be made a kingdom. He possessed everything that it was in the power of man to desire, and yet, with each new month, he seemed to become more unhappy and dejected.

When the heir to the throne drove out in his gilt coach and the duchess heard of the enthusiasm exhibited by the people, or saw him sitting at a feast of pheasants, smacking his lips and drawing the asparagus between his teeth, she reflected on his brother's hard lot and could not help feeling angry with her fortunate son for possessing all the gifts that Destiny refused to her poor outcast George.

Once when the duchess looked in the mirror, she saw George who had carefully taken a clock to pieces, trying to put it together again. A moment later the chancellor and the master of ceremonies came up

behind her in order to look into the glass also. No sooner had they done so than they set up a loud outcry, and behaved as if the enemy had invaded the land again.

"The poor, miserable, pitiable, ill-starred princeling!" one of them exclaimed. "A Greylock, it is unheard of, abominable, sacrilegious," the other moaned. They had indeed beheld a dreadful sight, for they had seen the son of Wendelin XV. beaten over the back by a common workman with a stick. The duchess had to witness many similar outrages later when she saw George in the school to which the stone-mason sent his promising apprentice. Alas! how long the poor child had to bend over his drawing-board and his slate doing dreadful sums, whereas Wendelin only studied two hours a day under a considerate tutor who gently coaxed him along the paths of learning. Everything that seemed difficult was carefully removed from his way, and every-

thing that was unpalatable was coated with sugar before being presented to him. Thus even in school the fortunate child trod a path strewn with roses without thorns, and if he yawned now and then in his tutor's face, the latter could flatter himself that the young prince yawned much more frequently over what other people considered pleasures and amusements.

When he attained his sixteenth birthday, he was declared to be of age, for princes mature earlier than other men. Soon afterwards he was crowned, not duke, but king, and it was remarked that he held his lace handkerchief oftener than ever to his mouth.

The state prospered under his government; for his mother and councillors knew how to choose men who understood their work and did it well. These men acted as privy council to the king. One of them was put in charge of the army, a second of

the Executive, a third of the customs and taxes, a fourth of the schools, a fifth exercised the king's right of pardon, a sixth, who bore the title the Chancellor of the Council, was obliged to do the king's thinking. To this experienced man was also confided the responsibility of choosing a wife for the young king. He acquitted himself wonderfully well of this duty, for the princess whom Wendelin XVI. espoused on his twentieth birthday, was the daughter of a powerful king, and so beautiful that it seemed as if the good God must have made a new mould in which to form her. No more regular features were to be seen in any collection of wax figures; the princess also possessed the art of keeping her face perfectly unmoved. If anything comic occurred, she smiled slightly, and where others would have wept, and thus distorted their features, she only let her eyelids fall. She was moreover very virtuous and, though

but seventeen, was already called "learned." She never said anything silly, and also, no doubt out of modesty, refrained from expressing her wise thoughts. Wendelin approved of her silence, for he did not like to talk; but his mother resented it. She would have liked to pour her heart out to her daughter-in-law, and to make her son's wife her friend and confidante. But such a relationship was impossible; for, when she tried to share with her daughter the emotions which crowded upon her, they rolled off the queen like water off the breast of a swan.

The people adored the royal pair. They were both so beautiful, and looked so noble and princely as they leaned back in the corners of their gilt coach during their drives and gazed into vacancy, as if their interests were above those of ordinary mortals.

Years passed, and the choice of the Chancellor of the Council did not turn out

to be so fortunate as had at first appeared, for the queen gave her husband no heir, and the house of Greylock was threatened with the danger of dying out with Wendelin XVI. This troubled the duchess indeed, but not so much as one would have supposed, for she knew that yet another Greylock lived, and the mother's heart ceased not to hope that he would return one day, and hand down the name of her husband.

She therefore persisted in sending messengers to those lands where, to judge by the costume of the people, the appearance of the country and buildings, as shown in the magic mirror, George was most likely to be found.

Once she allowed her daughter-in-law to look into the smooth glass with her; but never again, for it happened that the queen chanced upon a time when George, poorly dressed, and with great beads of perspira-

tion on his forehead, sat hard at work over his drawing in a miserable room under the roof; her delicate nostrils sniffed the air disdainfully, as if afraid that they might be insulted by any odour of poverty, and she said coldly: "And you wish me to believe that that person is a brother of my high-bred husband? Impossible!"

After this the duchess permitted no one save old Nonna to look into the glass; she, however, spent many hours each day in following the miserable experiences of her unfortunate child. Sometimes indeed it seemed to her as if a little happiness were mixed with the misery of his existence, and it also struck her that her little imp of a George was gradually growing to be a tall, distinguished-looking man with a noble forehead and flashing eyes, whereas Wendelin, despite his beauty and his grey lock, had become fat and red in the face, and looked like a common farmer.

Great was her solicitude for him, and her heart bled when she saw him suffer, which was not seldom; but then, on the other hand, she often had to laugh with him and be merry, when he gave himself up to the strange illusion of being happy. And had she ever seen a face so beaming as his was when one day, in a splendid hall, a stately grey-haired man in a long gown embraced him and laid a laurel wreath on the design for a building, at which she had seen George work. And then he seemed to have gone to another country, and to be living in the midst of the direst poverty, yet somehow the world must have been turned upside down, for he was as light-hearted and gay as if Dame Fortune had poured the entire contents of her cornucopia over him.

He lived in a little white-washed room, which was not even floored, but only paved with common tiles. In the evening he ate

nothing save a piece of bread, with some goat-cheese and figs, and quenched his thirst with a draught of muddy wine which he diluted with water. A squalid old woman brought him this wretched supper, and it cut the duchess to the heart to see him hunt about for coppers enough to pay for it. One day he seemed to have exhausted his store, for he turned his purse upside down and shook it, but not the smallest coin fell out.

This grieved her sorely, and she wept bitterly, thinking of the ease of her other son, and resenting the injustice with which blind and cruel Fortune had bestowed her gifts.

When she had dried her eyes sufficiently to be able to see the picture in the mirror once more, she beheld a long low house by the side of which there was a large space roofed over with lattice work. This was covered by a luxuriant growth

of fig-branches and grape-vine. The moon shed its silver radiance over the leaves and stems, while beneath it a fire cast its golden and purple lights on the house, the trellis roof, and the gay folk supping under it.

Young men in strange garb sat at the small tables. Their faces were wonderfully animated and gay. Before each one stood a long-necked bottle wound with straw, cups were filled, emptied, waved aloft or clinked. With every moment the eyes of the drinkers grew brighter, their gestures freer and more lively; finally one of them sprang up on a table, he was the handsomest of them all,—her own George, and he looked as if he were in Paradise instead of on this earth, and had been blessed by a sight of God and his Heavenly host. He spoke and spoke, while the others listened without moving until he raised a large goblet and took such a long draught that

the duchess was frightened. Then what a wild shout the others sent up! They jumped to their feet, as if possessed, and one of them tossed his cup through the lattice work and vines overhead.

When George got down again, young and old surrounded him, a few of them embraced him, and then the whole gay company began to sing. Later the duchess saw her son whirling madly in the dance with a girl dressed in many colours, who, though beautiful, was undoubtedly only the daughter of a swineherd, for she was bare-foot, and kiss her red lips—which indeed no Greylock ought to have done, yet his mother did not begrudge him the amusement.

It looked as if that were happiness, but true happiness it could not be, for such was not granted to a child born to misfortune. Yet what else could it be? At any rate, he had the appearance of being the most blessed of mortals.

He was in Italy; of that she became more and more assured, and yet none of her messengers could find him. A year later, however, her son began to busy himself with matters that would certainly give some clue to her more recent envoys.

George had left his poverty-stricken room and dwelt now in a handsome vaulted chamber. Each day dressed in a fine robe and with a roll of parchment in his hand, he superintended a great number of builders. Often she saw him standing on such high scaffolding that he seemed to be perched between heaven and earth, and she would be overcome by giddiness, though he seemed proof against it.

Once in a while a tall princely-looking man, with a beautiful young woman and a train of courtiers and servants, came to inspect the building. George would be sent for to show the gentleman and the young woman, who seemed to be his daughter,

the plans, and they had long conversations together. At these interviews George was not at all servile; and his gestures were so manly and graceful, his eyes shone so frankly, yet so sweetly and modestly, that his mother yearned to draw him to her heart and kiss him; but that, alas! could not be, and little by little it dawned upon her that he longed for other lips than hers, for the glances that he bestowed upon the maiden bespoke his admiration, which, the duchess noticed, did not seem to displease her.

Once, during an interview with George, she dropped a rose, and when he picked it up, she must have allowed him to keep it, for she gave no sign of disapproval when he kissed it and hid it inside the breast of his doublet. The large architectural drawing had screened this little comedy from curious eyes.

One evening, in the moonlight, the

duchess saw him climb a garden wall, with a lute in his hand, then the sky became overcast, and she could distinguish him no more; she could only see a lighted window where a beautiful girl was standing. The maiden charmed her beyond measure, and she grew hot and cold with the pleasurable anticipation that George might win her for his wife some day and bring her home. But then she reflected that he was a child born to ill-luck, and as such would never be blessed with the love of so exquisite a creature.

What she saw in the next few weeks confirmed this opinion. His manner was usually decisive, abrupt and self-reliant, but now he seemed to her like a clock that points to one hour while it strikes another. At the works he gave his orders as firmly and decidedly as ever; but as soon as he was alone, he looked like a criminal sentenced to death, and either sat bowed down

and miserable or else paced up and down the floor restlessly, gesticulating wildly. Often when he beat his forehead with the palm of his hand or struck his breast with his fist, his mother was frightened.

Once, after a garden party, where he had been fortunate enough to walk alone for a full hour under a shady pergola with the daughter of the gentleman who owned the building in progress, and to kiss her hand many times, he burst into tears as soon as he was in his own room, and behaved so wildly that his mother feared for his reason and wept bitterly also. Just at this time she ought to have felt nothing but joy, joy, heart-felt and unadulterated, for it appeared that the chief of the councilors had in truth been more far-sighted than other people and had not made a mistake in his choice of a queen, for she had just borne a son, and, moreover, one that was a true Greylock. His grey lock was

indeed somewhat thin and lacked the firm curl of the former ones ; but every one who was not colour-blind must acknowledge that it was grey.

The duchess would have liked to rejoice sincerely in her grandchild, but her affections were divided, and even when she held it in her arms, she yearned for the magic glass and a sight of her unlucky son.

Wendelin XVI., who had long been satiated with the pleasures which his position offered him, finding them all flat and insipid, experienced for the first time in twelve years a sensation of delight, like any one else, when he heard the faint cry of the infant and learned the good news that his child was a son. Hitherto his greatest satisfaction had been to hear the clock strike five when he had imagined that it was only four.

The child, however, was something en-

tirely new, and his heart, which usually beat as slowly as a clock that is running down, quickened its pulsations whenever he thought of his son. During the first weeks of its life he sat for hours at a time beside the gilt cradle, staring thoughtfully through his eye-glass at the future Wendelin XVII. Soon this occupation ceased to interest him, and he drifted along once more on the sluggish waves of his former existence, from minute to minute, from hour to hour.

The queen, his companion on this placid journey, had grown to be like him in many ways. The two yawned as other people breathe. They knew no desires, for as everything they possessed was always the best that could be had, to-morrow could give them nothing better than to-day. Their life was like a long poplar alley through which they wandered lazily side by side.

Pepe, the major-domo, after Wendelin came to the throne, was made body-servant to the king; he, above all others, was inclined to regard his master, born under a lucky star and possessing everything that one could desire, as a person favoured by Fortune; yet, after he had listened to his sighs and murmurs through many a quiet night, he reflected: "I am better off in my own shoes."

Pepe kept his own counsel and confided to no one save old Nonna what he knew. She, too, had learned to be discreet and consequently did not repeat his confidences even to the duchess, who had enough to bear without that additional burden.

How pale her darling seemed to her when she saw him in the glass! Yet, even on the worst days, he was busy at his place in the piazza, where the cathedral, which he had been building for three years, was nearing completion. The greatest energy

at that moment was being expended on the dome, which rose proudly over the crossing of the nave and transepts. Whenever Nonna looked over the duchess' shoulder to get a glimpse of George, he was always seen there so long as the sun was in the heavens. Many times the hearts of the two women stood still when they saw him climb to the highest point of the scaffolding in order to direct the work from there. Fate had only to make his foot slip one little inch or decree that a wasp should sting him on the finger to put an end to his existence. The poor mother was doubly anxious because he seemed so unconscious of the risk he ran up there and looked about him even more boldly and self-reliantly than usual.

The dome was already perfectly round. Why wasn't it finished, and why must he go on climbing again and again that frightful scaffolding?

"Nonna, Nonna, you must look, I can stand it no longer," she cried one day after she had been regarding the glass for a long time. "Hold me—he is going to jump. Nonna, is he safe? I can no longer see." And the glass shook in her hand.

"Oh!" the old woman answered, heaving a sigh of relief, "there he stands as solidly and firmly as the statue of Wendelin I. in the market-place. See. . . ."

"Yes, yes, there he is," the duchess cried and fell on her knees to thank Heaven.

The nurse continued to look in the glass. Suddenly she shrieked aloud and her mistress sank together and covered her face with her hands. "Has he fallen? Is he dead?" she groaned.

But Nonna, despite her gout, sprang up and ran to her mistress with the mirror in her hand and stammering, half laughing and half crying, like one drunk yet pos-

sessed of his senses: "George, our George, look. Our prince has the grey lock. Here, before my very eyes I saw it grow."

The duchess jumped up, cast one glance into the glass, saw the grey lock distinctly, and then forgetting that she was a princess and Nonna but a humble servant, threw her arms about her and kissed her on the mouth, above which grew so luxuriant a moustache that many a page would gladly have exchanged his young upper lip for her older one. Then the duchess reached once more for the mirror to assure herself that her eyes had not been deceived, but her fingers trembled so with excitement that the glass slipped from her hand and fell to the floor where it broke in a thousand pieces.

What a fright it gave them! Fortunately Nonna, after a lifetime spent in the care of babies, had laid aside what we call nerves, else she had certainly fallen in a

• swoon like her mistress; she was consequently able to support the duchess and soothe her with gentle words.

In the meanwhile the young architect from the staging inspected the stone which crowned the dome and found that it had been well set. But he had no suspicion that the grey lock had grown on his head. Older architects came and absorbed his attention. They pressed his hand, praised him and said that he had just finished a marvellous work of art. They examined, with him, the interior of the cathedral, and then appeared the prince for whom George had built the church, and to him the architects explained how solid and well proportioned was the dome which had been finished a few hours before. The noble prince listened with comprehension; after he was satisfied he drew George to his breast and said: "I thank, you my friend. Despite your youth I entrusted you with a

great undertaking and you have more than fulfilled my most sanguine expectations. At my age we count it gain not to be disappointed, and the day when our expectations are not only fulfilled, but surpassed we number among our festivals. Your work will be an ornament to the city and state, and will insure you undying fame. Take this from a man who wishes you well."

The prince took the golden chain from his own neck, hung it about George's, and continued :

"Art is easy, some say; others, that it is difficult. Both are right. It must be delightful and ennobling to design such a work but the carrying out must be laborious and attended with many perplexities. I can see that you have found it so, for only yesterday I remarked with pleasure the youthful glint of your brown hair and to-day,—no doubt while you were superin-

tending the laying of the dome's crown,—
a lock of hair above your left temple has
turned grey, Master Peregrinus.”

George reeled at this sudden and unexpected fulfilment of the dearest wish of his soul. He had gone out into the world under this name of Peregrinus and had never betrayed the fact that he was a prince's son. For several years his heart had been overflowing with love for the daughter of the prince and he had known that she reciprocated his affection sincerely, yet for the sake of his own family he had battled bravely with his passion and had borne his heartache and longing in silence.

Proofs had not been wanting to show him how devoted the prince was to him, and if he had been able to say to his patron, “I am a Greylock,” no doubt his lord would gladly have accorded his daughter's hand to him. George had repeated this to himself a thousand times, but he had

remained firm, had kept his counsel and had not ceased to hope that by righteous energy and industry he might accomplish the "great and good task" which had been required of him in Misdral's cave. When his grey lock grew, the fairy Clementine's fish had said to him, then would he know that he had achieved something great and good, and that he might bear once more the name of his proud race and return home without exposing his family to any danger. He had reached the goal, the task was completed, he might call himself a Greylock once more, for the curl which was the pride of his race now adorned his head too.

The prince watched him turn very red then very pale and finally said inquiringly: "Well, my Peregrinus?" The architect fell upon his knee, kissed the prince's hand and cried:

"I am not Peregrinus. Henceforth I am a Greylock, I am George, the second

son of the Duke Wendelin, of whom you have heard, and I must confess to you, my noble lord, that I love your daughter Speranza, and I would not exchange places with any god if you would but give us your blessing."

"A Greylock!" the prince exclaimed. "Truly, truly this day should not be reckoned among the feast-days but should be regarded as the best day in all the year. Come to my arms, my dear, my worthy son!"

An hour later the architect held the princess in his arms. What a wedding they had! George did not return immediately to his own home. He wrote to his mother that he was alive and well and intended to visit her in company with his young bride as soon as he had finished a great work with which he was occupied. He sent with the letter a portrait of his wife and when the duchess saw it and read

the letter she grew ten years younger from pure delight, and old Nonna at least five.

When Wendelin XVI. was informed that his brother still lived, he smiled and the queen followed his example, but as soon as they were alone she cried: "The land of the Greylocks will be smaller than ever now and even before it was not so great as my father's."

When Speranza presented her husband with a son the duchess and her faithful attendant Nonna went to Italy, and the meeting between mother and son was beyond all measure joyful. Two months she spent with her dear children and then she returned home, George and his wife having promised to visit her the following year in the capital of the Greylocks.

The cathedral was finished. There was no finer building under the sun and artists and connoisseurs flocked from all parts of the world to see it. George received the

commendations of the most critical and his name was ranked among those of the greatest architects.

Proud of his work, yet ever modest, he together with his wife and child returned to his home.

He found great rejoicings in progress when he crossed the frontiers, for Moustache, the field-marshal, had just conquered another enemy, and by the conditions of the treaty of peace another province came into the possession of the Greylocks, making their kingdom then as large as that of the queen's father.

When George entered the capital he found flags flying, heard bells pealing, the explosions of mortars and firing of cannon, sometimes one shot after another, sometimes a deafening salvo of many guns together, and a thousand voices shouting: "Hurrah, hurrah! Long live Wendelin the Lucky!"

The Assembly of States had decided the day before that the king by whom the land had been so wonderfully extended, and whose government had been so prosperous that not even a shadow of misfortune had fallen across it, should be called : "Wendelin the Lucky."

This title of honour was to be seen on all the flags, triumphal arches, transparencies, and even on the ginger-bread cakes in the cook-shops.

George and his lovely wife rejoiced with the other jubilant people, but they were happiest when they were alone with his mother.

Wendelin XVI received his brother and his brother's wife in the great reception room, and even went further forward to meet him than the point prescribed by the master of ceremonies; the queen made good this violation of etiquette by remaining herself well within the boundaries laid

down. After the feast Wendelin went with his brother onto the balcony, and as he stood opposite to George and looked at him more closely he let his languid eyelids droop, for it seemed to him that his brother was a man of iron, and he suddenly felt as if his own backbone were made of dough.

In the evening the lake was beautifully illuminated, and the day was to end with a boating party on the water enlivened with music and fireworks.

In the first boat, on cushions of velvet and ermine, sat Wendelin XVI and his queen, in the second George and his beloved wife. His mother could not bear to be separated from these two, or to miss for even an hour the happiness of having them with her.

The weather for the festivals was as perfect as they could have wished. The full moon shone more brilliantly than usual, as if to congratulate the king on his new

title, the bells pealed forth their chimes again, a chorus of maidens and boys in skiffs followed the state gondola of the royal pair, singing the new song which had just been composed in their honour, and which consisted of twenty-four stanzas, each one ending with the lines :

“The luck and glory let us sing
Of lucky Wendelin, our king !”

By his side sat his wife, who continued her complaints against the newly-found brother, and urged her husband to make investigations as to whether or not this architect were a true Greylock, “To be sure, both he and his son have the grey lock,” she said, “but then they both have light hair, and the barber’s craft has made great strides lately ; and certainly that fat-cheeked baby looks as if it belonged in the cradle of a peasant rather than in that of a prince.”

Wendelin XVI did not listen to what she said; his heart was very heavy, and every time one of the bells rang out above the others, or the chorus sang, "lucky Wendelin, our king," particularly distinctly and enthusiastically, he felt as if he were being jeered at and ridiculed. He longed to cry aloud in his shame and pain, and to fly for comfort to his sympathetic mother and strong brother in the other boat. When he stared into the water it seemed as if the fish made fun of him, and if he looked at the sky he imagined the moon made a mocking grimace at him, and looked down scornfully at the wretched man whom they called "fortunate." He knew not where to gaze, he withdrew within himself, and tried to shut his ears, while he wished to Heaven that he could change places with the active sailor opposite who was setting the purple sail with his brawny arms.

A light breeze wafted the royal gondola

towards the island where the fireworks were to be displayed. The second boat followed at a short distance. George held his mother's hand and his wife's in his own, few words were spoken, but their very silence betrayed the great treasure of their love and happiness, and spoke more plainly than long discourses how dear these three persons were to one another.

The royal gondola floated quietly past the cliff that separated the southern from the northern part of the lake; no sooner had the second boat approached it, however, than an unexpected and fearful gust of wind blew suddenly from the clefts of the rocks and struck the boat, and before the sailors had time to lower the sail threw it onto its beam ends. George sprang forward instantly to help the sailors right her, but a second gust tore away the flapping sail, and capsized the gondola, which was caught and carried to the bottom by a rush-

ing eddy. Both of the women rose from the waves at George's side. He grasped his mother, and struggled bravely against the wind and current until he laid her on the beach at the foot of the cliff. Then he swam back as rapidly as he could to the place of the accident. His mother was safe, but his wife, his beloved, his all? To rescue her, or to drown with her was his sole idea.

At that moment he perceived a long golden streak rising and falling with the waves. It was a lock of her hair, her wonderful silken hair. With mighty strokes he sped towards it, reached it, grasped it, then his trembling hands felt her body and lifted her up. She breathed, she lived, and it depended on him to save her from the evil spirit, from death. With one arm he held her to him, with the other he parted the waters; but the lake seemed to turn to a mighty torrent that bore down upon him

with its heavy waves. He struggled, he fought with panting breast, yet in vain, always in vain. He felt that his strength was being exhausted. If no one came to his aid, he was lost; he raised his head to look for help.

He saw his brother's gondola sailing as peacefully and undisturbed from storm or accident as a swan in the moonlight, and the bitter thought passed through his mind, that Wendelin was the lucky one, and that he had been born to misfortune.

His arm was struggling with the tide once more, and this time more successfully. Then Speranza opened her eyes, recognized him, and, kissing him on the forehead, murmured: "My own love, how good you are!"

From the cliff the duchess called to him: "George, my best, my only son!"

His heart warmed within him, all his bitterness disappeared, and the waves

seemed to rock him and the burden in his arms as in a cradle. The picture of his mother floated before his vision, that of his child, and of his beautiful work, the great indestructible cathedral, which he had erected to the honour of God. He reflected what sweet joy each new spring had brought him, how he had been blessed in his work, what exquisite delight he derived from all that was beautiful in the world. No, no, no. Of all the men on this earth, he, the child destined to misfortune, was the happiest. Overwhelmed by a feeling of gratitude, he returned his wife's kiss. Saved! She was saved! He felt firm ground beneath his feet; he lifted her on high; but, just as he laid her in the strong arms that reached down from the cliff to receive her, a high wave caught him and dragged him back into the deep, and the waters closed over him.

The next morning a fisherman found

his body. George's wife and mother were saved. The wise men of the land said that the ill-starred child had perished, as they had foreseen, and the people echoed their words.

In the mausoleum of the Greylocks only two places remained empty, and these had to be kept for Wendelin the Lucky and his queen, consequently the ill-omened son might not even rest in the grave of his fathers, and George was buried on a green hillside, whence there was a beautiful view of the lake and distant landscape.

King Wendelin the Lucky and his wife lived to a good old age. After the king became childish, he ceased to groan and whimper in the night, as he had formerly done. When he died, he was interred next to Queen Isabella, in the coldest corner of the marble mausoleum, and no ray of sun ever rested on his stone sarcophagus. His son, Wendelin XVII., visited his

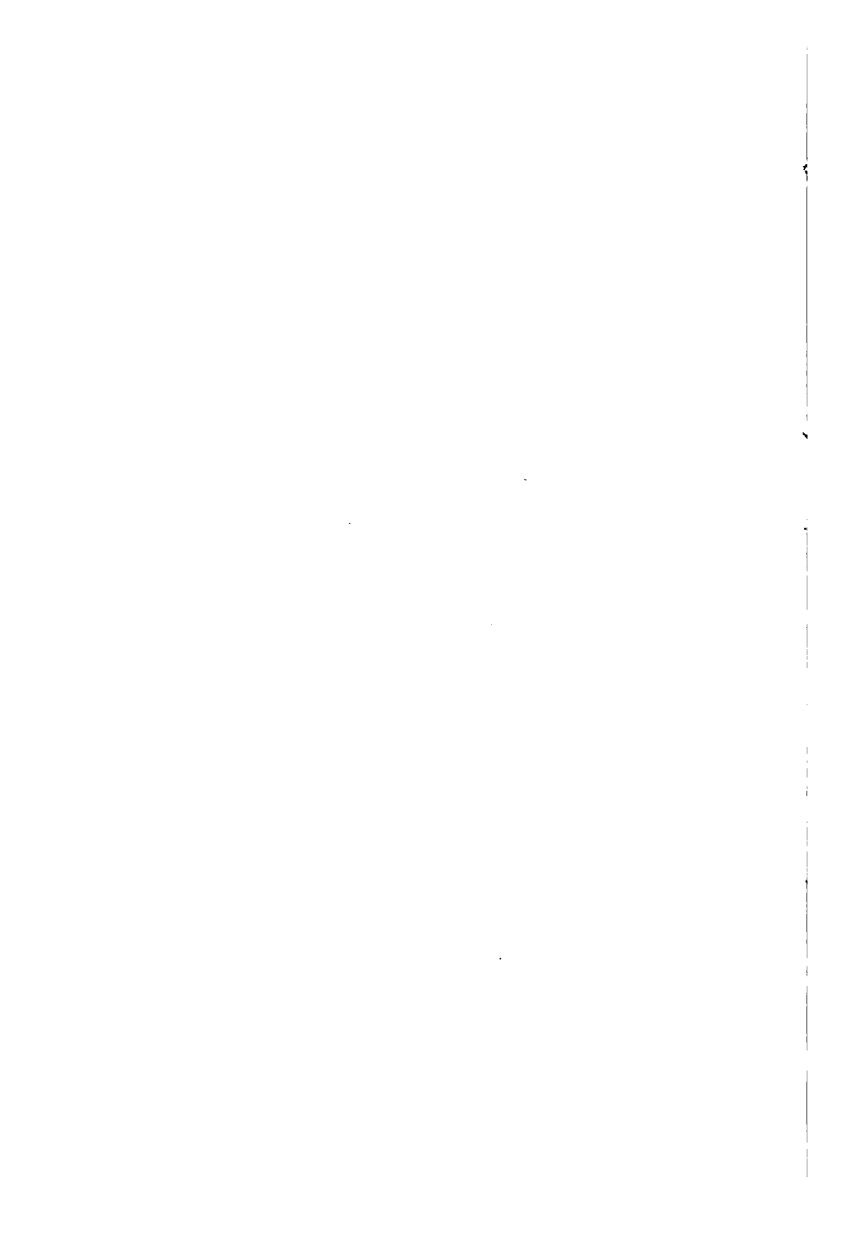
father's grave once a year, on All Saints' Day, and laid a dry wreath of immortelles on the lid of the coffin.

George's resting-place was surrounded by bushes and flowers. His mother and wife and child visited it and cared for it. When the spring came, nightingales, red-breasts, finches and thrushes without number sang their merry notes above the head of the unfortunate one who lay there. His son George grew to be the pride of his mother, and became a noble prince in beautiful Italy. Centuries have passed since then, yet to-day enthusiastic artists still make pilgrimages to the hillside where the sun shines so brightly, to lay wreaths on the grave of the great architect George Peregrinus of the princely house of the Greylocks.

They at least do not regard him who lies there as one born to misfortune.

THE NUTS

*A CHRISTMAS STORY FOR MY CHILDREN
AND GRANDCHILDREN*



THE NUTS.

A CHRISTMAS STORY FOR MY CHILDREN AND
GRANDCHILDREN..

THE wounded colonel, whom we were nursing back to health in our house, was not allowed to walk long, and in the afternoon, after he had pottered about a little, he was obliged to rest in the comfortable old easy-chair, which was known as grandfather's chair.

When twilight fell, our dear guest lighted the last of the three pipes, which the doctor permitted him to smoke every day, and made a sign to the children, which the young people obeyed gladly, for they loved to listen to his stories.

The convalescent was under orders not to talk for more than half an hour at a time, for his wounds were so severe that our ex-

perienced physician declared it to be contrary to the laws of nature and quite phenomenal that he should be among the living at all.

As for his stories, they had never failed to hold the attention of his audience; this was partly due to the fact that he usually had to break them off at the point where the interest had reached its climax.

Moreover, the deep voice of the narrator was much gentler than one would have expected, after looking at the broad-shouldered, heavy figure, and there lay in his suppressed, and often whispered tones a secret charm, which the children were not the only ones to feel; besides which his eyes produced their share of the profound impression, for every emotion that disturbed his easily-excited soul found a reflection therein.

That the colonel openly preferred our six-year-old Hermy to his brothers and sis-

ters was due to the circumstance that the child had once burst into tears at a look from the officer, which the latter employed to call the children to order, if they were inattentive, or exhibited signs of unbelief when he had not expected it. After this Hermy was so evidently his darling that there was no further chance for Hermy's younger sister, who had at first promised to be the favourite, and I shall never forget the soft, almost motherly, caressing tones that came from that grey-bearded man with the large round head and strong face, when he sought to comfort the child.

It was remarkable to see how easily this man, who was accustomed to obedience, and famous for his bravery and keen energy, could become a child among children. He had lost a beloved wife, a little son, about Hermy's age, and a young daughter, and no doubt our numerous family reminded him of these departed ones.

As for his tales, he separated them into distinct categories. Some of them he began with the words: "Here I am," and then he held himself strictly to the truth. Others began: "Once upon a time." While the former were drawn mostly from his own full and eventful life, the latter were fairy stories, pure and simple, sometimes already well known, sometimes made up, wherein fairies, ghosts, elves, gnomes, goblins and dragons, will-o'-the-wisps, nixies, kelpies and dwarfs disported themselves.

Christmas was approaching, and the next day, Christmas-eve, the tree was to be lighted. On the twenty-third of December, a little while before the hour for story-telling, Hermy came home, and exhibited to his brothers the trifling presents, which he had chosen: an eraser for his father, a lead-pencil for his mother, a bag of nuts for his grandmother, and similar trifles which, though insignificant in themselves,

had nevertheless exhausted his little store of savings. His elder brothers, to whom he had exhibited with great pride these purchases, expressed none of the admiration which he had expected, but began to tease him by calling the things "trash," as indeed they were, and poking fun at the "wonderful presents" of their small brother; they would have been less cruel, perhaps, had he been one of their sisters.

Karl wanted to know what their father, who never was known to make a drawing, would do with an eraser, and Kurt added that he did not see the use of giving their grandmother nuts, when she had more in her own garden than all of them put together would receive on ten Christmas-eves.

Bright tears gathered in the eyes of the little one, and he cast a troubled look at his despised treasures, in which he had rejoiced so heartily only a short time before.

He began to sob quietly, and saying dejectedly: "But I hadn't any more money!" he stuffed his gifts, shorn of their glamour into his pockets.

The colonel had watched the scene in silence; now, however, he drew his favourite to him, kissed him, and caressed his fair curls. Then he invited him gaily to sit right close to him on the footstool, and bade the other children to sit down, too, and told Karl and Kurt to keep their ears wide open.

My wife and I entered at this moment—we heard later of what had happened—and begged the colonel to allow us to listen also. The permission was willingly granted; after the lamp was brought, for it was later than usual, and we had settled ourselves on the sofa, the colonel stroked his moustache for some time, and began, after he had gazed quietly before him for a moment: "To-day my story shall be

called, 'The Nuts.' Does that please you, Hermy?"

The little one smiled at him expectantly and nodded his head. The colonel continued:

"You believe, no doubt, children, that no one ever came back from the dead, and that therefore no mortal knows what Heaven looks like, nor Hell. But I — look at me well — I can tell you something about it."

Here he made a short pause while my wife handed him his pipe and a match. The children looked at one another in doubt and suspicion, for this was the first story of the colonel which had not begun with, "Here I am," or, "Once upon a time," and they were consequently uncertain whether it was a true story or one that he had made up. Wolfgang, who is thirteen and my oldest boy, and who already calls his younger brothers, "the young ones,"

—and promises to be a true child of the times, inclined to believe it the latter, but even he sat up straighter and looked puzzled as the colonel continued:

“The two balls that I have in here, and the sabre cut on my shoulder,—but you know how and where I received them—to be brief, I sank from my horse onto the grass in the afternoon, and not until the following morning was I found by the ambulance corps and carried to the hospital. There they brought me to life again. In the interim—which lasted for the half of a day and one whole night—I was certainly not alive like one of you, or any other two-legged creature endowed with five senses.”

With these words his penetrating eyes glanced from Karl to Kurt; the girls caught hold of one another's hands and one could plainly read in their expressions that they considered it rash to be in such close proximity to a person who had erstwhile

been dead. It was fortunate for them that the resuscitated colonel was so good, and that there was no doubt about his actual existence, which was proved by his voice and the smoke that he puffed into the air during every pause.

“Yes, children,” he began anew, “a great wonder was worked on me, an old man. This long body here lay on the bloody ground among groaning men, dying horses, broken gun-carriages, ammunition wagons, exploded bombshells, and discarded weapons; but my soul—I cannot have been too hardened a sinner in this world—my soul was permitted to soar to Heaven. One, two, three, as fast as you can say, ‘That is an apple,’ or ‘The fair Ina has a pretty doll in her lap,’ and it had arrived. And now—I can see it in your eyes—you would like to know how it seems in Heaven, and God knows I cannot blame you, for it is beautiful, marvellously beauti-

ful, only unfortunately I am not allowed even to attempt its description. That must ever remain a mystery to the living because—but that is no matter, and evil would befall me if I were to chatter.”

At this point the colonel was interrupted by many expressions of disappointment, but he was resolute, and continued in a peremptory tone:

“That will do. Description indeed is forbidden to me; but there are certain of my experiences about which I may tell you. So listen! That Hell lies underneath Heaven you have doubtless heard from some one or other. Naturally the holy dead see and hear nothing of the pains of the lost, for that would entirely spoil the joys of Paradise for them; but now and then—I believe once a year—it is given to the blessed to look down into Hell. There is, however, one condition in particular attached to this privilege. When the dome

which conceals Hell from the sight of the angels is opened, it is for the relief of the condemned. God in his mercy has decreed that the saints shall look down into the abyss in order to tell St. Peter if they see among the damned any one from whom they have received any benefit, or of whom they have even heard any good. If the keeper of Heaven's gate is pleased with the generous action which the lost soul performed while on earth, he has the power of shortening the time of punishment, or can even pardon it altogether, and bid it enter into Paradise.

“As for me, I arrived in Paradise on a day when Hell was open to view, and came to know, thereby, many strange things.—Ah! That was the hardest part of my story; I trust that you have understood it?”

The narrator's glance sought the children's eyes once more; but this time ques-

tioningly rather than peremptorily. When the young lips all cried "yes," and "of course," he smiled, nodded his massive head amiably, and continued :

"That the angels are full of pity, and glad to relieve the misery of the unfortunate, whoever they are, and wherever they may be, goes without saying, and it will not be necessary to tell you how diligently they sought to remember some one good deed that might redound to the credit of one of the lost. But St. Peter is a mild and just judge, and the gleaning yielded but a small return, for only a few of the angels could recall any act that was worth mentioning. It was also granted to me to look into the place of torment, and the things I saw there were too awful. Picture it to yourself as you will ! When I recovered from the horror that fell upon me, I recognized many men and women whom I had known on earth. Among them were

many whom I had been accustomed to consider pious and virtuous, and whom I had expected to find in a high place in Heaven, rather than there below, and yet of those very persons the Elect could recall the fewest deeds that had been done from purely generous motives. An act was mentioned of this one or that, which on the surface seemed good, sometimes even great,—but there on high the springs of human actions are open to view, as well as the real end, which the author had in mind, and these were always such that those who had performed the best deeds could be accredited with the least charitable intention. Their pious works had always been executed in order to make them conspicuous in the eyes of men, or to attain for themselves some distinction, or to flatter their vanity, or to arouse the envy of their neighbours, or to contribute in some indirect way to the increase of their riches. Perhaps

you may not altogether understand what I mean; but no matter, your mother may explain as much as she thinks good for you.

"The poor things who were disappointed, as well as the unfortunate ones for whom no voice was raised, made me very unhappy; but I could do nothing for them.

"Among the latter I noticed a woman whom I had known well on earth, and who deserved to be among the lost, I thought. I had never anticipated any other sentence for her. You do not understand, children, what a cold heart is; but hers had been either ice or stone. Although she had possessed more than was needed to gratify her own wants, she could never be moved by the most touching appeals of the poorest to relieve their distress. She had used other people to satisfy her selfish desires and then discarded them ruthlessly. She had gone through life without loving

one single soul—of that I felt convinced—and no one had loved her, and she had died unregretted. She must have been as wretched on earth as she was there in Hell; for which of us can be happy here, if we do not love and are not loved?

“‘There is no chance of a voice being raised in her favour,’ I said to myself. But I was wrong; for at that moment a lovely angel-child flew past me on its blue and white wings. Without any sign of fear it flew direct to St. Peter, who looked formidable enough with his long beard and great keys, and, pointing with its little forefinger to the hard-hearted woman, cried: ‘She once gave me a handful of nuts.’

“‘Really,’ answered the keeper of Heaven. ‘That was not much, and yet I am surprised; for that woman would not part with so much as a pin, during her life. But you little one, who were you on earth?’

“‘Little Hannele was my name,’ an-

swered the angel. 'I died of starvation, and only once did any one give me anything in my life to make me happy, and that was that woman yonder.'

" 'Marvellous,' answered Peter, stroking his white beard. 'No doubt the nuts were given as a miserly payment of some service you did her.'

" 'No, no,' the angel answered decidedly.

" 'Well, tell us how it happened then,' the apostle commanded, and the dear little soul obeyed :

" 'My sick mother and I lived in the city all alone, for father was dead. Just before Christmas we had nothing more to eat. So mother, though she lay in bed and her head and hands were burning, made some little sheep of bits of wood and cotton and I carried them to the Christmas market. There I sat on some steps and offered them for sale to the passers-by; but nobody wanted them. Hours passed, and it was very cold;

the open wound in my knee, which no one saw, pained me so, and the frost in my fingers and toes burned and itched dreadfully. Evening came, the lamps were lighted, but I dared not go home; for only one person had thrown a copper into my lap, and I needed more to buy a bit of bread and a few coals. My own pangs hurt me, but that mother lay at home alone, with no one to hand her anything, or support her when her breathing became difficult, hurt me still more. I could hardly bear to sit on the cold steps any longer, and my eyes were blind with tears. A barrel was set down in front of the house, and while a clerk was rolling it over the sidewalk into the shop, the stream of passers was stopped. That woman there—I remember her well—stood still in front of me. I offered her one of my sheep, and looked at her through my tears. She seemed so hard and stern, that I thought: ‘She won’t give me anything.’

But she did. It seemed suddenly as if her face grew softer, and her eyes kinder. She glanced at me, and before I knew it, she had put her hand in the bag which she carried on her arm, and thrown the nuts into my lap. The cask had been rolled into the shop by this time, and the throng of people carried her along. She tried to stop. It was not easy, and she only did it to toss me a second, third, and fourth handful of the most beautiful walnuts. I can still see it all, as if it were to-day! Then she felt in her pocket, probably to get some money for me, but the press of people was too strong for her to stand against it longer. I doubt if she heard that I thanked her.'

"Here the angel broke off, and threw a kiss to the condemned woman, and St. Peter asked her how it happened that she, who had been so deaf to all appeals from the poor, had been so sweetly generous to the child.

“The tormented woman answered amid her loud sobs: ‘The tearful eyes of the little one reminded me of my small sister, who died a painful death before I had grown to be hard and wicked, and a strange sensation—I know not how it happened myself—overpowered me. It seemed as if my heart warmed within me, and something seemed to say to me that I would never forgive myself as long as I lived, and would be even unhappier than I was, if I did not give the child something to rejoice over at Christmas time. I longed to draw her towards me and kiss her. After I had tossed her half of the nuts, which I had just bought, I felt happier than I had for many a day, and I would certainly have given her some money, though only a little . . .’

“But Peter interrupted her. He had heard enough, and as he knew that it was impossible for any one in Heaven or Hell to tell an untruth, he nodded to her, say-

ing: 'That was, beyond dispute, a good deed, but it is too small to counterbalance the great weight of your bad deeds. Perhaps it may lighten your punishment. Still great riches were meted out to you on earth, and what were a few nuts to you! The motive that urged you to bestow them is pleasing in the sight of the Lord, I acknowledge; but as I said before, your charity was too paltry for you to be released from your pains because of it.'

"He turned to go, but a clear voice of wonderful sweetness held him back. It was that of the Saviour, who advanced with majestic dignity towards the apostle and spoke: 'Let us first hear if the alms-giving of which we have just learned was really too small to plead for leniency towards this sinning soul. Let us hear' — turning to the angel — 'what became of the nuts.'

"'O dear Saviour,' answered the angel, 'I ate half of them, and I was grateful

to you, for I felt that I owed them to your bounty as they were my 'little Christ child' as the people in the city where we lived called a Christmas present.'

" 'You see, Peter,' the Saviour interrupted the angel. 'Do we not owe it to the nuts of that woman that a pure child's soul was led to us? That in itself is no small thing! Tell what further happened to you?'

" 'I ate most of them,' the little girl answered, but I had still more to eat by Christmas-eve; for the people who had looked at me when the woman threw something into my lap were interested in my suffering, and soon I had sold all six sheep, and besides many pennies and groschen, one big thaler had flown into my lap. With these I was able to buy mother many things that she stood in sore need of, and, though she died on New Year's morning, she had had many little comforts during her last days.'

“The Anointed cast another look full of meaning at Peter, when a large and beautiful angel, the spirit of the mother of the cherub, began: ‘If you will permit me, O, holy Jesus, I, too, would like to say a word in favor of the condemned. Before Hannele came home with the nuts, I lay in bed without hope, or help in my great suffering. I had lost all faith, for my prayers had not been heard, and in the bitterness of my heart, it seemed that you, who were said to be the friend of the poor on earth, and God the Father, had forgotten us in our misery, in order to overwhelm the rich with greater gifts. In my distress, and that of the child; I had learned to curse the day on which we were born. Oh! how wild were my thoughts during the time that Hannele was trying to sell the sheep, and did not come home; though I needed her so sorely. I was often so thirsty that my mouth burned as with fire, and the mo-

ments when I gasped for breath were frequent, and almost unbearable when no one was there to lift me up. I called those people liars who would persuade the poor that they had a merciful Father in Heaven, who looked upon them as his children, and cared for them. But when Hannele came home, and lighted the little lamp, and I saw her tiny face, where for a long time I had seen no smile, but only pain and grief, now beaming with joy, when I saw the nuts and the other good things which she had brought, and saw her pleasure in them, my belief in thee, O Lord, and in the kind Father returned, and I ceased not to be grateful to the end. If now, in the glory of thy magnificence, I know bliss unutterable, I owe it to that woman, and to the fact that she was good enough to throw the nuts into Hannele's apron.'

"Peter nodded affirmatively. Then he bowed before the Saviour and said: 'The

little gift of the condemned soul has indeed borne better fruit than I imagined; yet when I tell you what a great sinner she was on earth. . . .’

“‘I know,’ the Son of God interrupted him. ‘Before we decide upon the fate of this woman, let us hear what the child did with the rest of the nuts, for we know that she did not eat them all. Now my little angel, what became of the last of them? Speak on. Gladly will I listen to you.’

“Hannele began anew: ‘After they had buried mother, they sent me into the country among the mountains, for they said it was not the duty of the city to care for me, but that of the village parish, where my parents were born. So I was taken there. The six nuts that I had saved I took with me to play with. This I most enjoyed doing in the spring, alone on the little strip of grass behind the Poor-house, in which I was the only child. Besides me there were

but three old women 'being fed to death,' as the peasants used to say. Two of my companions were blind, and the third was dull-witted and gazed ever straight before her. Not one of them noticed anything that happened around them, but my heart used to grow light when everything about me budded, and sprouted, and burst into bloom. My body was always aching but my pains could not lessen my enjoyment of the spring. Wherever I looked, men were sowing and planting. It was the first time that I had ever seen it, and the wish came over me to confide something to the good earth that would take root, and sprout, and grow green and high for me.

“‘So I stuck four of my nuts into the ground. I put them as far apart in the small space as I could, so that if big trees came from my seeds they might not stand in one another’s way, but might all enjoy the air and the sunshine that I was so

thankful for. I saw my seeds sprout, but what became of them afterwards I did not live to see. Two years after I sowed them a famine fell upon us. The poor weavers who lived in the mountain village had all they could do to nourish wife and child. There was little left for the Poor-house. As I was already ill I could not stand the misery, and I was the first to die of the dreadful fever caused by hunger. Only one of the blind women, and the dull-witted one followed the sack in which I was buried — for who would have paid for a coffin? The last two nuts I divided with the old women. Each one of us had a half, and how gladly we ate the little morsel, for even a taste of any dainty seemed good to us, after we had lived on nothing but bread and potatoes. From here I watched the other nuts grow to be trees. All four had straight stems and thick crowns. Under one of them that stood near a spring, which is now called the

Fresh Spring, an old carpenter who came to the Poor-house built a bench.'

"Here another angel interrupted the little narrator with the question: 'Do you mean the nut-tree in Dorbstädt?' and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, he cried: 'I, Master, I am that old carpenter, and during my last summers, I had no greater pleasure than to sit by the Fresh Spring under the nut-tree, and while I smoked my pipe to think of my old wife, whom I was soon to find again with you. In the autumn, too, many a dry brown leaf found its way among the more expensive tobacco ones.'

"'And I,' cried a former pedler, breaking into the carpenter's story, 'I assuredly have not forgotten the nut-tree, where I always set down my pack when my shoulders were nearly broken, and under whose shade I used to rest my weary limbs before entering the village.'

“‘I, too! How often have I stopped under the spreading branches of that tree on a hot summer day and found refreshment!’ cried a former post-messenger of Dorbstädt. A porter who had also lived there added his praises.

“‘But the nut-trees were cut down many years ago,’ the latter added.

“‘I saw it,’ cried the spirit of little Hannele, and one heard from her tone how she deplored it. ‘They were felled when the Poor-house was given up. But the great Son of God has now heard what he wished to know.’

“‘No, no,’ the Saviour answered, ‘I should still like to know what became of the wood of these trees.’

“The voices of several angels were heard at the same moment, for many of the poor weavers of Dorbstädt were to be found in the Heavenly Kingdom. St. Peter, however, bade them to be quiet, and permitted

only the one who had last entered the Abode of the Blessed to speak.

“‘I was the village doctor,’ this one began, ‘and I quitted the earth because I, too, fell a victim to the pestilence of which many of the poor people were dying, and against which I fought with all my powers, but with small success. I can tell you all that you wish to know, my Master, for, during forty-five years, I devoted my humble services to the sick poor there. When Hannele died in our Poor-house—it happened before my time—the misery was even greater than at present. The weavers were ground down by the large manufacturers, until an energetic man built a factory in our village, and paid them better wages. As the population then increased, and consequently the number of patients, space was wanting in which to house them, for the dilapidated Poor-house—whither they were carried—was no longer large enough to

accommodate them all. Therefore the parish, aided by the owner of the factory, built a hospital for the whole district, and the site of the old Poor-house was chosen for it. The beautiful nut-trees which Hannele had planted had to be destroyed. I was sorry to be obliged to give the order, but we needed the ground where they stood. As we had to be economical in everything, big and little, we had planks sawn out of the trees for our use.'

"At this point another spirit interrupted the physician. 'I have lain in one of the beds made from the wood. At home I slept on a bundle of straw, and very uncomfortable it was when I was shaken by the fever. In the hospital all was different, and when I lay in my comfortable bed, I felt as if I were already in Heaven.'

"'And I,' cried another broad-winged angel, 'for ten years I walked with the crutches that were made for me from the

nut-tree by the Fresh Spring, and old Conrad, below on the earth, is still using them.'

" 'And mine also,' another continued, 'were of the same wood. I had lain for a long time on my back; but after I got them, I learned to walk with them and they enabled me to stand before the loom, and to earn bread once more for my family. That man yonder from Hochdorf has had the same experience, and the wooden leg of William, the toll-gate keeper, who entered here shortly before me, was made of wood from the nut-tree.'

" 'I owe it a debt of gratitude, too, but for an entirely different service,' said a beautiful angel, as it bowed its crowned head reverently before the Son of God. 'My lot below was a very hard one. I was early left a widow, and I supported my children entirely by the work of my hands. By dint of great effort I brought them up well, and my three sons grew to be brave

men, who took care of themselves, and helped their mother. But all three, my Master, were lost to me, taken away by the unfathomable wisdom of the Father. Two fell in war, the third was killed by the machinery while at his work. That broke my strength, and when they brought me to the hospital I was on the verge of despair, and life seemed a greater burden than I could bear. Your image, my Saviour, had just been finished by a sculptor, who had carved it from the wood of the nut-tree by the Fresh Spring. They put it up opposite to my bed. It represented you, my Lord, on the cross, and your head bowed in agony, with its crown of thorns, was a very sorrowful sight. Yet I paid but small heed to it. One morning, however—it was the anniversary of the death of my two dear sons, who had lost their lives, fighting bravely side by side for their Fatherland—on that morning the sun fell upon your sad face, and

bleeding hands pierced by the nails, and then I reflected how bitterly you had suffered, though innocent, that you might redeem us, and how your mother must have felt to lose such a child. Then a voice asked me if I had any right to complain, when the Son of God himself had willingly endured such torments for our sake, and I felt compelled to answer no, and determined then to bear patiently whatever might be laid upon me, a poor, sinful woman. Thenceforth, my Lord, was your image my consolation and, since the wood of which it was made came from the tree planted by Hannele near the Fresh Spring, I owe beyond doubt the better years that followed, and the joy of being with you in Paradise, my Saviour, to the nuts which that condemned woman gave to the child.'

"Humbly she bowed her head again. The Son of God turned to St. Peter, saying: 'Well, Peter?'

"The latter called to the guardians of Hell : ' Let her go free, the gates of Heaven are open to her. How rich and manifold, O Lord ! is the fruit that springs from the smallest gift offered in true love !'

" ' You are right,' answered the Saviour, gently, and turned away."

The colonel had talked for a longer time than was allowed him by his doctor, and he needed rest. When he appeared again at supper time, in order to help us eat our Christmas carps, he found little Hermy standing with Karl and Kurt before the fire, and he noticed how his favourite's eyes rested with pleasure on the nuts which he had bought for his grandmother ; and how the older boys, who were only too prone to tease their younger brother, treated him with a certain tenderness, as if they had something to make up for.

At table we overheard Kurt say to Karl: "Little Hermy's present for grandmother was not a bad idea," to which Karl answered quickly: "I am going to put away some of my nuts to-morrow, and plant them in the spring."

"To make a pair of crutches for me, or in order that you may go to Heaven?" asked the colonel.

The boy blushed, and could find no answer; but I came to his rescue, and replied: "No, his trees shall remind us of you, Colonel, and of your stories. When we give, we will, in remembrance of you, give in all love and willingness, and when we receive, even the smallest gift, we will only ask in what spirit it was offered."

THE END.

RARAHU; OR THE MARRIAGE OF LOTI.—By Pierre

Loti, from the French by Mrs. Clara Bell. *Authorized edition.* One volume. 16mo. paper, 50 cts. 12mo. cloth, \$1.00.

Not long ago we had occasion to speak of Julien Viaud's "Pêcheur d'Island"—that wonderful romance of the wild and frozen North in which marvellous descriptions of sea-faring life in Icelandic waters were intermingled with equally marvellous pages depicting the progress of a love affair between a wild young mariner and a beautiful daughter of Brittany. In the "Mariage de Loti," now translated by Clara Bell under the title of *Rarahu*, we are taken to the antipodes and the author lavishes all his power as a writer in painting in the most exquisite and idyllic colors the experiences of a young naval officer during a six months' stay at Tahiti. Tahitian customs are not based on Puritanic ideals, and this marriage of Loti would be regarded as something far different under less benignant conditions; but morals, like religion, are, as we all know, largely a matter of geographical location, and of this affair between the foreigner and the pearl of Papeete it may at least be said that it reflected the utmost devotion while it endured. The book is chiefly remarkable for its exotic flavor; it breathes the true atmosphere of the tropics. Tahiti, as Julien Viaud reveals that far-distant island, is a paradise of the senses, a veritable abode of syrens for those who go down to the sea in ships, and all its remote and unfamiliar charm,—the brooding silences of nature, the vast forests haunted neither by singing bird or venomous insect, the towering peaks, the ever-flowing cataracts leaping from the heights, the cool pools of refreshing water, the tremendous surf rolling in forever on the resistant shore, the gorgeous semi-civilization of Pomaré's court, the existence of a simple-minded, imaginative people who find their wants amply provided for by nature and who pass their hours with no thought or care for the morrow—all this gets a place in Julien Viaud's book. As for *Rarahu* she is a tropical flower born to dazzle for a time with her beauty and to intoxicate the soul with her adorable fancies, only to fade at last into something worse than death. This is Tahiti seen with the eyes of the poet, pictured by one who chooses his colors deftly and who has no call to portray the dreary or the commonplace. The book as it stands is a masterpiece of art, a symphony in words, expressing with graceful and often poignant modulation the emotions that stir the heart at twenty and make existence a vista of perpetual pleasure or a bourn of limitless despair. Viaud is one who at least in fancy has sounded all the heights and depths of passion, and yet there is in his method a reserve which piques interest. Being a genuine artist he knows with unerring felicity when and at what point to stay his hand. — *The Beacon*, Boston, July 26, 1890.

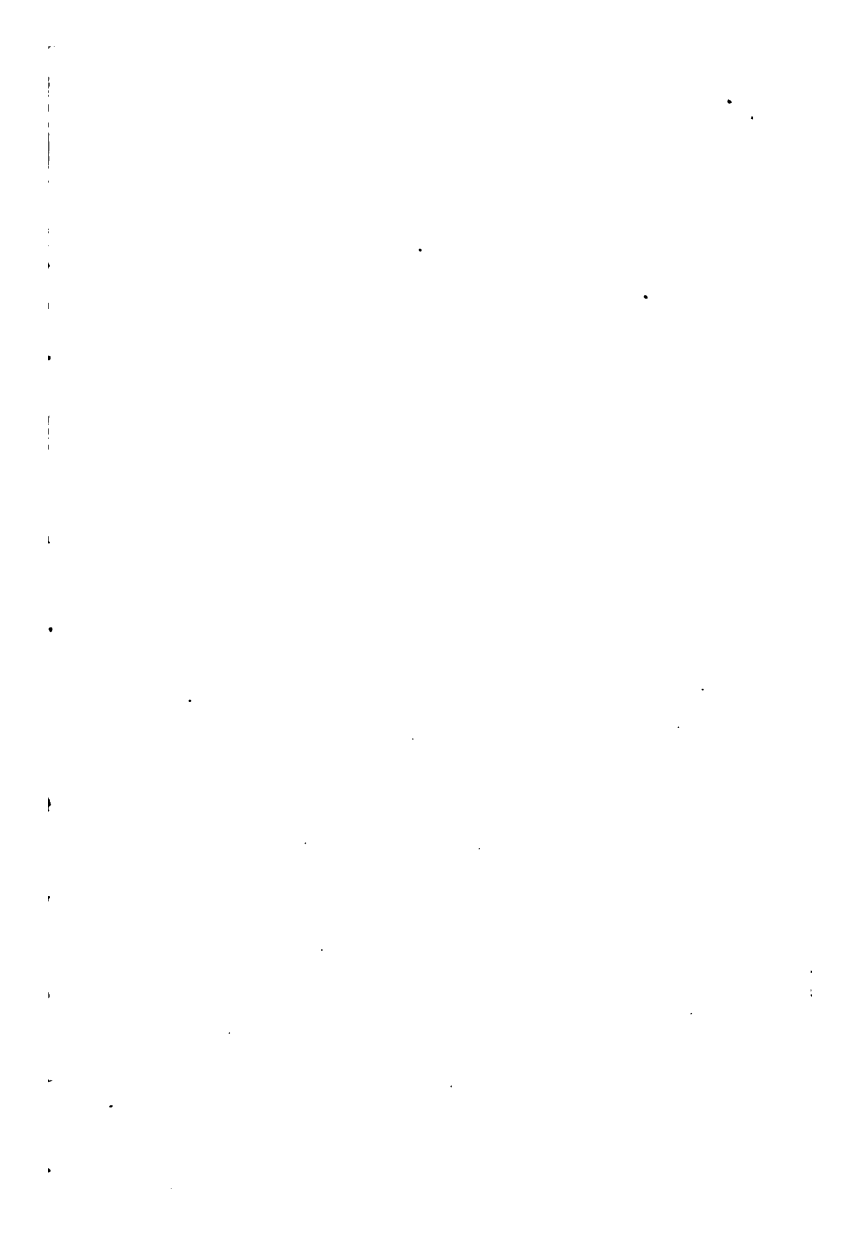
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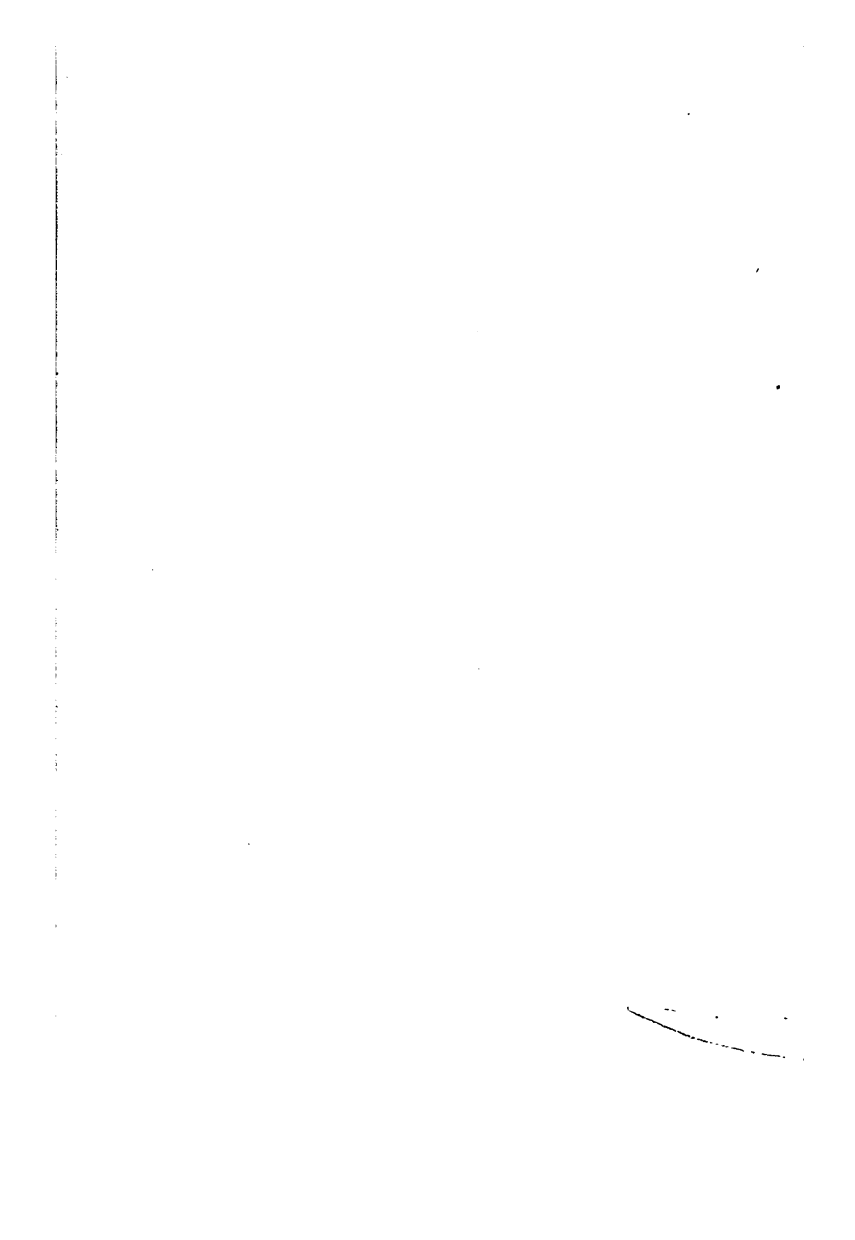
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